



Press release
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Visions du Réel 2020: a generous and accomplished online edition

This online edition was a first for the whole team, guests and the various audiences. Launched a little over a month ago, the ambitious gamble proved to be a success with a number of 60,500 online viewings.

Despite the distance and technical constraints, the convivial spirit of Visions du Réel was maintained. The interest generated by the films in the selection and by the Masterclasses given by the Maître du Réel Claire Denis, as well as Petra Costa and Peter Mettler, the filmmakers invited for the 2020 Ateliers, surpassed the organisers' expectations. The *Industry Talks*, *Rendez-vous*, *Nuits de Visions* and various activities proposed on the website also found their audience.

The new practices developed throughout this 51st edition, which was almost entirely redeployed online from 17 April to 2 May, have enabled Visions du Réel to bring its audience together and to renew it. Innovative solutions were found on short notice and partnerships created in record time. The Festival management and Foundation Board were able to adapt to the circumstances to expand the event into new territories. "We will make a clear analysis of our experiences and learn from them so as to enhance the digital dimension of our future editions which will take place once again in the warm atmosphere of the city of Nyon and its population" points out Raymond Loretan, President of the Festival.



Punta Sacra by Francesca Mazzoleni, Sesterce d'or la Mobilière 2020

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The Sesterce d'or la Mobilière was awarded this year to the film *Punta Sacra* by Francesca Mazzoleni to celebrate an emblematic work of non-fiction cinema. *The Other One* by Francisco Bermejo won the Sesterce d'or of the Canton de Vaud and *Sapelo* by Nick Brandestini was awarded the Sesterce d'or SRG SSR. The Audience Award will be announced this Sunday 3 May at 6:30 p.m. by press release.

Closing Ceremony and Prize-winners

Raymond Loretan (President), Émilie Bujès (Artistic Director) and Martine Chalverat (Administrative and Operational Director) will open and host the Closing Ceremony live on Sunday 3 May at 8.00 pm, via the Festival website. This event will include all the comments and reactions of the different Juries and award winners.

A collective achievement

Following the health restrictions, the Festival team embarked on an ambitious project: repositioning the vast majority of the 2020 selection online and making it accessible to the public. In the end, 134 films were redirected onto the internet. The encounters and flagship activities of Visions du Réel were redesigned so they could be followed remotely. "It would have been impossible to pull off this extraordinary feat without the enthusiasm and perseverance of the whole team, and the different suppliers, partners and sponsors.", notes Martine Chalverat, Administrative Director.

Talking about numbers, the public responded very well. The 134 films put online were viewed 60,500 times, and a large majority of them reached the limit of 500 spectators, thanks to the different platforms that collaborated with the event: Festival Scope (in partnership with Shift 72), Tënk and Doc Alliance. The discussions with the filmmakers, debates and Masterclasses gathered 4'500 people (effective participation) and remain available on the website.

Within the framework of the redeployment of the Festival online, the Industry domain welcomed over 1,300 film industry professionals. Thanks to the combination of software and the technical team's skills, it was possible to maintain the activities intended for the industry (*Pitching du Réel*, *Rough Cut Lab*, *Docs in Progress*, co-production meetings, *RTS Pitch*, *SWISS FILMS Previews*) as well as the events open to the public (*Industry Talks*).

The hotline, which was in constant use throughout the event, took 500 calls between 17 April and 2 May. Web users facing technical difficulties when viewing the films were able to contact the Festival employees every day between 9.00 am and 8.00 pm. These calls also generated discussions with the public, who gave very positive feedback.

Live Masterclasses

The Masterclasses given by the guests of honour Claire Denis (Maître du Réel 2020, in partnership with ECAL), Petra Costa (Atelier 2020, in partnership with Geneva University of Art and Design) and Peter Mettler (Atelier 2020) proved very popular online.

"I enjoy finding narrow spaces to make my films", declared Claire Denis in the first moments of her three hours Masterclass on 29 April. Sitting cross-legged on the floor, the film maker appeared in all her generosity and answered to the questions of Emilie Bujès, Lionel Baier, the public and the students from the ECAL in a forthright manner from her Parisian apartment. This year, the proximity between filmmakers and spectators was also discernible.

The second Masterclass that was held on 30 April with the Brazilian film director Petra Costa was also one of the highlights of the Festival. Her approach, both political and personal, shows that another Brazil is possible: "I like getting into other people's bodies; I imagine my films as a stream of consciousness (...) Filming is an act of constant creation:"

Filmmaker Peter Mettler offered two impressive interactive meetings around his work on May 1: a Masterclass in the afternoon followed by a Vjing performance (of which he is one of the forerunners) in the evening. The filmmaker lent himself to the game of conversation with great generosity through a fertile and constant dialogue from his studio in Toronto.

Emilie Bujès, artistic Director says: "Through these timeless paths, the filmmakers have allowed spectators to experience privileged and highly emotional moments of sharing around (non-fiction) cinema. These Masterclasses have made it possible for us to get the best out of the virtual. And the 2020 edition has resolutely enabled us to identify the variety of audiences sensitive to those

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cinematographic forms and willing to take part in the Festival." The videos of these Masterclasses are available directly on the Festival website.

Sesterce d'or la Mobilière awarded to *Punta Sacra*

The Sesterce d'or la Mobilière was awarded to Francesca Mazzoleni (Italy) for her film *Punta Sacra* (International Feature Films Competition). Composed of Marco Alessi (producer, Italy), Frédéric Boyer (artistic director, France/United States) and Ursula Meier (Switzerland/France), the jury enthusiastically comments: "Children and mothers in the heart of a no-man's land, a universe of women in search of happiness in front of a sea on which they depend, resolved to defend their right to live in this desolate place they revere. A people torn between the desire for change and the need to settle down, proudly assuming his identity. Late romantic combatants forgotten in their outpost."

Sesterce d'or Canton de Vaud attributed to *The Other One*

Sesterce d'or Canton de Vaud was awarded to *The Other One* (International Burning Lights Competition) by Francisco Bermejo (Chile). The jury, made up of Ala Eddine Slim (filmmaker, Tunisia), Valentina Novati (programmer and producer, France) and Bianca Oana (producer and writer, Romania), has been touched by "the simplicity of this Beckettian story of life and its ghosts. A wonderful essay on loneliness, this tale is a true tour de force and one of the most affectionate portraits of what it means to live with a mental illness."

Sesterce d'or SRG SSR given to *Sapelo*

The jury of the Sesterce d'Or SRG SSR, in which Karim Sayad (filmmaker, Switzerland/Algeria), Alessandro Stellino (critic and programmer, Italy), Jia Zhao (producer, China/the Netherlands) took part, has been very impressed by *Sapelo* (National Competition): "We were deeply touched by the dedication of the older generation living in this magical place to preserve a community, maintain values and try to protect their children from the difficulties of a world threatening their way of life."

Jean-Luc Godard Exhibition

From 12 June, in Nyon Castle, Visions du Réel will present *sentiments, signes, passions – à propos du livre d'image*, an unprecedented exhibition conceived with Jean-Luc Godard.

Contacts

Caroline Stevens, Press Officer

cstevens@visionsdureel.ch

+41 79 759 95 11

Beat Glur, Press Officer for German-speaking Switzerland

bglur@visionsdureel.ch

+41 79 333 65 10

Gloria Zerbinati, International Press Officer

gloria.zerbinati@gmail.com

+33 7 86 80 02 82

More info: <https://www.visionsdureel.ch/en>

51st edition of Visions du Réel: 17 April—2 May 2020

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