



CROSSING EUROPE Film Festival Linz

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Departure of Christine Dollhofer, Opening Films 2021,

Program Preview and Cooperations, YAAAS! Workshoprally & Youth Jury,

GOLDEN BAG Display Window Contest

Onward to Europe!

In not quite five weeks the **eighteenth edition** of CROSSING EUROPE Film Festival Linz that will take place from **1 to 6 June** will get under way as an in-person film event (it goes without saying that we will comply to all rules and regulations in place concerning the prevention of the spread of the Covid-19 virus). In addition to this from **6 June to 6 July**, ten selected European feature films and documentaries will be offered on the platform of our streaming partner KINO VOD CLUB as "**Crossing Europe VOD Premieres**".

After months of intense preparation the complete program for CROSSING EUROPE 2021 has now been finalized and will offer audiences the possibility to go on a cinematographic exploration of Europe. We can already say that the virtual trip around Europe will include around **120 feature films and documentaries** and will encompass 40 countries.

Once again, in 2021 the festival will stay true to its credo that stands for a hand-selected film program that does justice to the great variety of Europe and intends to offer audiences a **differentiated view on the state of Europe** – with cinephile perspectives that give an optimistic and progressive image of a Europe that is open to the world, and intend to get audiences excited to finally be able to go to the cinema once again.

Before we give a compact overview of the **opening ceremony** (1 June 2021) and give some highlights from the coming festival edition, we want to point out the following **dates relevant to the festival**: The deadline for festival accreditation is on Tuesday **4 May**, the program press conference will take place as an **online event** on Wednesday **19 May** (in German only), for which the link will be available on our festival website and one day later on **20 May**, the online ticket sales will be opened (details [HERE](#)).

In addition to this, we want to announce a coming **personnel change**. **Christine Dollhofer**, who founded CROSSING EUROPE together with Wolfgang Steiniger in 2003 will relocate to Vienna in **November 2021** and will head the **Filmfonds Wien**, the second largest Austrian film funding agency, and will therefore be handing over all agendas of CROSSING EUROPE after eighteen years of successful work. The future personnel changes will be decided on by the main shareholder of the *Crossing Europe gem. GmbH* in accordance with the CROSSING EUROPE team, the *Movimento gem. GmbH* and their legal representatives. The **new festival director** will be announced in the **early autumn** of 2021.



Opening Films 2021

Traditionally CROSSING EUROPE opens with **more than one film** every year – and will once again do so this year – that are representative for the **variety of the contemporary European film landscape**, and at the same time act as a cross section of the program of the year.

This year's opening rally is headed up by Maria Schrader's Berlinale festival entry **ICH BIN DEIN MENSCH / I'M YOUR MAN**, Tribute guest Ivan Ostrochovský will present his current work **SLUŽOBNÍCI / SERVANTS** as its Austrian premiere, and the documentary **THE WIRE** is exemplary for how Europe "actively" is closing its borders. The world premiere **SURVIVING GUSEN** honors three survivors of the Nazi extermination camp in Gusen near Linz, and the Night Sight opener will be **MANDIBULES / MANDIBLES**, the newest work by chief absurdist Quentin Dupieux.

ICH BIN DEIN MENSCH / I'M YOUR MAN (DE 2021) – Austrian Premiere

Directed by: Maria Schrader

Program section: European Panorama Fiction; length: 104 min | feature film

Distributor in Austria: Filmladen; Cinema release in Austria: tba

Guest: *Maria Schrader (invited)*

The multi-talented Maria Schrader – award winning actress and successful director – takes on the eponymous story by Emma Braslavsky and tries her hand on a contemporary take of the robotlove motif. - In order to get her hands on funding for her studies, the scientist Alma (Maren Eggert was awarded the Silver Bear for her portrayal) agrees to take part in an extraordinary experiment. For three weeks she lives with the anthropomorphic robot Tom, who turns into her perfect partner thanks to his artificial intelligence.

SLUŽOBNÍCI / SERVANTS (SK, RO, CZ, IE 2020) – Austrian Premiere

Directed by: Ivan Ostrochovský

Program section: Tribute; length: 80 min | feature film

Guest: *Ivan Ostrochovský, Katarina Tomkova (producer)*

With his highly acclaimed feature film **SERVANTS**, that celebrated its world premiere at the Berlinale 2020 in the competition section *Encounters*, Ostrochovský now seems to have entirely arrived in the realm of fiction, after having made a name for himself as a director and producer of documentary and semi-fictional works over the past few years. Kept in a strict black-and-white, he tells the story of two young men in a priest seminary who find themselves in between political fronts in the early 1980s in Czechoslovakia. What decision do they take – do they conform to the totalitarian system, or join the resistance against the communist regime?

THE WIRE (BE/HR/NO/SI/LT 2021) - Austrian Premiere

Directed by: Tiha K. Gudac

Program section: European Panorama Documentary; length: 77 min | Documentary

Guest: *tba*

The river Kupa is the border river in between Croatia and Slovenia. In order to close down the so-called Balkan route and "protect" the Schengen area, fences were set up as border protection over the past few years, something that has massively influenced this idyllic river area and its inhabitants. Tourism as well as peaceful coexistence are being threatened as old wounds (20 000 partisans were murdered here) are opening up again.



SURVIVING GUSEN (AT 2021) – World Premiere

Directed by: Gerald Harringer, Johannes Pröll

Program section: Local Artists; length: 68 min | documentary

Distributor in Austria: Bright Films; Cinema release in Austria: June 2021

Guests: Gerald Harringer, Johannes Pröll

Since its very beginning the program section *Local Artists* has had a long tradition of showing works that deal with (Upper) Austrian contemporary history. 76 years after the end of the Nazi terror regime, the essayist documentary film **SURVIVING GUSEN** honors three survivors of the extermination camp in Gusen, a space that has since been turned into a residential area. 71 000 people were deported to this camp during the national socialist terror, and over half of them died there due to the conditions faced there, along with mistreatment and torture. The supposed idyllic area shown in landscape footage stands in stark contrast to the memories of the three men and the book passages soberly read by Maria Hofstätter and Peter Simonischek, the police protocols and reports by experts.

MANDIBULES / MANDIBLES (FR/BE 2020) – Austrian Premiere

Directed by: Quentin Dupieux

Program section: Night Sight; length: 78 min | feature film

Distributor in Austria: Filmladen; Cinema release in Austria: tba

In this year's Night Sight opener by the chief absurdist Quentin Dupieux (copyright Night Sight curator Markus Keuschnigg) two simple friends come into the possession of a giant fly the size of a terrier that promises to bring them great riches. Why not train the fly in order to rob a couple of banks?

Politics in its Interplay with Media, Contemporary History, and Society

HINTER DEN SCHLAGZEILEN (DE 2021), **LA MORT DE GUILLEM** (ES 2020), and **NEMESIS** (CH 2020)

These three films shown in the festival program 2021 deal with the topic of politics in various striking ways. Politics and journalism during a time of populism, fake news, and social media are at the heart of **HINTER DEN SCHLAGZEILEN** (Opening film of the *DOK.fest in Munich*). The documentary gives insight into the hidden world of investigative journalism.

Two reporters of the renowned German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* meet Edward Snowden, research the sale of arms, follow hot and cold trails. Then a story comes along that throws Austrian politics into a frenzy: The "Ibiza Affair" surrounding the FPÖ politician and vice chancellor at the time Heinz-Christian Strache, and as the saying goes ... the rest is history.

Represented at the festival for the fourth time is the Spanish **CROSSING EUROPE** award winner Carlos Marques-Marcet. In his feature film **LA MORT DE GUILLEM** he deals with the real case of Guillem Agulló in the form of a striking political thriller, and thereby shows the deep trenches left by the violent regime of Francisco Franco that have left their mark until this day.

In **NEMESIS** Thomas Imbach makes use of an essayist style in order to radically criticize the xenophobia and politics of migration prevalent in Switzerland; by doing so he also looks at political and ethnic problems without actually naming them. From a single perspective – through the point of view of a filmmaker – this cinephile highlight documents the demolition of the freight train yard in Zurich over multiple years, and the ensuing construction of a new police headquarter and prison for detainees waiting for deportation, at the same time as he looks at the abolition of history and its replacement in the form of total security.



| An overview of the three films |

- ❖ **HINTER DEN SCHLAGZEILEN / BEHIND THE HEADLINES (DE 2021)** Daniel Sager, 90 min | European Panorama Documentary – Austrian Premiere | [Distributor in Austria](#): filmdelights, [Cinema release](#): Autumn 2021
- ❖ **LA MORT DE GUILLEM / THE DEATH OF GUILLEM (ES 2020)** Carlos Marques-Marcet, 95 min | European Panorama Fiction – Austrian Premiere
- ❖ **NEMESIS (CH 2020)** Thomas Imbach, 132 min | European Panorama Documentary – Austrian Premiere

Film Tour Ulrike Ottinger: PARIS CALLIGRAMMES

presented by CROSSING EUROPE, Austrian Film Museum, and Diagonale

The renown German avant-garde director, painter, photographer, and all-round artist Ulrike Ottinger created a gem in the form of a gripping **autobiographical documentary** with her film PARIS CALLIGRAMMES (DE/FR 2019; 129 min), that takes a look at her younger self from the point of view of the elderly artist. PARIS CALLIGRAMMES outlines the “French years of training” of the artist, who made her way from the sleepy town of Constance to the metropolis of Paris where she came into contact with the avant-garde for the first time in what can only be described as an **artistic epiphany**. **Rich with archival material** this cinematographic **poem of figures** tells the story of shaping encounters and companions of Ottinger, artistic movements, wounds of French colonialism, as well as the sociopolitical upheaval sparked by the war in Algeria and the student protests in ten chapters.

The film celebrated its premiere at the Berlinale 2020, where Ottinger was additionally awarded the Berlinale Kamera for her lifetime achievements. PARIS CALLIGRAMMES will be presented in **June 2021** by CROSSING EUROPE, the Austrian Film Museum, and Diagonale in **Linz, Vienna, and Graz, all in the attendance of Ulrike Ottinger**.

Screening Dates:

Linz | CROSSING EUROPE: Friday, 4 June

Vienna | Austrian Film Museum: Tuesday, 8 June

Graz | Diagonale: Wednesday, 9 June

Austrian Premieres – at CROSSING EUROPE and Diagonale

Due to the ongoing state of emergency in the cultural sector, CROSSING EUROPE, the Diagonale (8-13 June) and the short film festival Vienna Shorts (27 May – 1 June) are collaborating intensively this year. All three festivals will take place one right after the other in 2021, which is why the premiere status will be managed in parallel with overlapping program selection. Diagonale and CROSSING EUROPE together will present **10 films as Austrian premieres**, including two feature films as world premieres: **2551.01** by Norbert Pfaffenbichler (AT 2021, 65 min) and **MOTORCITY** by Arthur Summereder (AT 2021, 85 min).

The director **Norbert Pfaffenbichler** calls his **experimental feature film 2551.01** a “dystopian slapstick film”. Once again, he goes back to old Chaplin-material and forms a tragicomic moral tale of child abandonment and police brutality. “Next to the various textures of silent film he also uses elements from splatter films, sitcoms, and exploitation films – and a truly eclectic musical score.” (Stefan Grisseemann)

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MOTORCITY (AT 2021, 85 min) is Arthur Summereder's **first full length documentary film**. The setting is the city of Detroit, the ostensible focus is on the local amateur drag racing scene and a number of its protagonists. From this starting point the film begins to take a closer look at the rise and fall of the entire city, the relationship between techno and car racing, and finally at the European view of the US-American way of life. (production note)

The idea of celebrating "joint" premieres at the Diagonale and CROSSING EUROPE: A touch of normalcy is returning to the Austrian festival and cinema landscape in June. After a truly exceptional year it was important to both festivals that current Austrian production get the chance to be shown in a cinema "properly" in front of the largest possible audiences in the two different cities.

YAAAS! Workshoprally & Youth Jury

The **DIY practical format YAAAS! Workshoprally** is a module within the framework of the [YAAAS! Youth Program](#) at CROSSING EUROPE, that offers a holistic program for film education, the acquisition of media competency, and DIY video production for young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty. 2 June 2021 will offer **five practical workshops** on a range of topics, such as camera, digital animation, props, and sound. The complete workshop program as well as details on the instructors and registration can be found [HERE](#).

| *The YAAAS! Workshoprally is supported by the "CULTURE CONNECTED" program.* |

Also we are happy to announce the **five members** of this year's **YAAAS! Youth Jury**, who will select the winner of the competition section YAAAS! Competition, and award the director of the winning film the YAAAS! Youth Jury Award (3000 € powered by [VdFS](#)). The five youths all attend the BORG Grieskirchen: **Paul-Simon Kapfer** (18 years old, Wallern a. d. Trattnach), **Laura Schmidt** (17 years old, St Georgen bei Grieskirchen), **Hanna Gaisböck** (18 years old, St Marienkirchen a. d. Polsenz), **Anna Maria Fischbauer** (18 years old, Natternbarch), and **Berat Can** (18 years old, Riedau).

GOLDEN BAG Display Window Contest

Many people in Linz, as well as guests of the festival from both in and outside of the country are looking forward to once again (after the cancellation of the festival last year due to Corona) seeing the many decorated display windows around the inner city that make for that special festival flair in all of Linz. All those who design their display windows with CROSSING EUROPE promotional material are eligible to win great prizes, such as seven hundred bags by [Europack](#) in the design of the winner. - The GOLDEN BAG Display Window Contest is a cooperation with the [ÖNachrichten](#) and the [Linzer City Ring](#).

| *Details on the GOLDEN BAG Display Window Contest can be found [HERE](#) | Registration | at: goldenbag@crossingeurope.at | Deadline 10 May 2021* |

Festival date: [1 to 6 June 2021](#)

Deadline for Accreditation: 4 May 2021

Press conference 2021 (in German only): [Wednesday, 19 May 10 AM](#) via live-stream at www.crossingeurope.at

Filmstills and Images: <https://www.crossingeurope.at/xe-presse/pressefotos.html>

Logo and Festival Sujet: <https://www.crossingeurope.at/xe-presse/logos>

Regular **updates and current information** on Crossing Europe 2021, as well as our efforts in regards to Covid-19 prevention can be found as always on our website www.crossingeurope.at and on our social media channels [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).