



Braunschweig International Filmfestival (BIFF)
Internationales Filmfest Braunschweig e.V.
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PRESS RELEASE

„This city makes this festival”

At the awards ceremony of this year's 35th Braunschweig International Film Festival (BIFF), nine prizes were awarded in the Great House of the Braunschweig Staatstheater, with a record total of 60.500 Euros. Actor Sebastian Koch received the "Die Europa" award for his lifetime achievement.

Braunschweig, November 06, 2021. A special evening: that was the award ceremony of this year's 35th Braunschweig International Film Festival (BIFF), which invited to the Great House of the Braunschweig Staatstheater on Saturday evening. After a fully digital year in 2020, the festival will once again take place in venues in the Löwenstadt - the ASTOR Filmtheater, the Universum Filmtheater, the Roten Saal, the LOT-Theater, the Eulenglück and also the Staatstheater Braunschweig. Where the festival was impressively opened on Monday evening with the opening film concert for "Der Golem, wie er in die Welt kam", the circle was virtually closed that evening: at the awards ceremony, a total of nine prizes were awarded to filmmakers and actors.

A kiss on the hand for the stage of the State Theater

"Cinema and theater have one thing in common: real people belong here," said actor Götz van Ooyen, beaming into the audience. For him, it was a home game: the Offenbach native is a permanent member of the ensemble of the Braunschweig Staatstheater - on this evening, he led through the program as the moderator. The first honor went to the winner of the Heimspiel Award, the award for the best film with regional relevance. Self-employed cinematographer and filmmaker Prof. Jutta Tränkle summed up the jury's decision on behalf of the jury: "The selection was really difficult. The topics were very different and we discussed them for a long time. It was

truly a tight race, nonetheless everyone agreed in the end." An honorable mention was given to TÜRKISCHE RIVIERA (Germany, 2020) by Senem Göcmen - the Heinmspiel Award itself was finally presented to Katharina Marie Schubert. "A story as poetic as the film's title," Tränkle praised DAS MÄDCHEN MIT DEN GOLDENEN HÄNDEN (Germany, 2021). "I am so happy about this award and to be here. Ever since I was a little kid I wanted to be on this stage - now I'm here," explained Schubert, who was born in Gifhorn and grew up in the Löwenstadt. There was a kiss on the hand for the stage as a farewell.

The KINEMA jury, which consists of six young people from France and Germany, was also unanimous. Meanwhile, the German premiere THE THIRD WAR (France, 2020) by Giovanni Aloi not only won the Franco-German Youth Award, but also the Volkswagen Financial Services Film Prize worth 10.000 Euros. Director Aloi was not only extremely happy to be part of the festival, but also thanked the BIFF for its good organization. "A war film without war, a hyper-realistic flow," summed up art historian and moving image curator Ewa Szablowska, who formed the jury together with Uwe Tschischak (Volkswagen Financial Services, Head of Corporate Communications) and Daniel Kothenschulte (Frankfurter Rundschau). Kothenschulte affirmed, "A brilliant film!". An honorable mention for the award went to the entry from Malta by Alex Camilleri: LUZZU (2021).

"Films can touch, inspire and trigger discussions"

Socially currently much-discussed topics such as the global climate crisis are the focus of the "Green Horizons" series. Jury member Nadja Varsani (fechnerMEDIA) brought up the question: Can films save the world? "Certainly not save it - but: films can touch us, they can inspire us and trigger discussions." The award was then given to a "very sensitive and courageous film that has the power to initiate such a discussion." Director Erlend E. Mo, who passed away in January of this year, is being honored here posthumously for his work JOURNEY TO UTOPIA (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, 2020); his wife sent a very personal and moving video message to the award ceremony in Braunschweig. "It's nice to see that his work is valued and that it leaves a footprint." She emphasized, "Keep fighting for what they believe in."

The Braunschweig Film Prize is endowed with 5.000 Euros and is presented to the best German-speaking up-and-coming actor. Actor, writer and director Tucké Royale, who won that prize last year, named Dora Zygouri in DIE SAAT (Germany, 2021) with an honorable mention - the film prize, meanwhile, went to NICO (Germany, 2020) lead actress Sara Fazilat. Royale commented, "An irrepressible sense of justice, determination and so much more - you melted into your character in the film." Fazilat, who had an accident during her last crime shoot, is on the way to recovery and is very happy about the award, as her agent Maximilian Haas reported on her behalf.

It is not only prizes like "Green Horizons" that are intended to initiate discussions - the "Die TILDA" prize is also intended to send out an important signal. The women's film prize, worth 5.000 Euros, is sponsored by 65 women from Braunschweig's urban society: that alone is an important signal. Jury member Prof. Dr. Sabine Brombach (Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences) outlined, "The prize can trigger thought, it can point out disadvantage and reveal what is hidden." In this case, Brombach said, the jury immediately agreed: HIVE (Kosovo, Switzerland, Northern Macedonia, Albania, 2021). "A sensitive, intense accompaniment of women. The film, based on true events, recalls the massacre of Krusha e Madhe." HIVE, meanwhile, is the feature-length debut of director Blerta Basholli. In a video message, she described, "We didn't realize how much impact this film would have. It's all the more beautiful to see it, because we worked on it with a lot of passion."

Surprise appearance by rapper MC Rene.

This year's "Queer Film Award Lower Saxony" is for GIRLSBOYSMIX (Netherlands, 2020) by director Lara Aerts. Aerts explained why the film carries such an important message: "You have to keep raising awareness about intersexuality. Many still don't know what it means." Markus Manegold of the Association for Sexual Emancipation (VSE) added: "There is not only male and female." Meanwhile, a real surprise for the guests in the Great House of the Staatstheater was the appearance of MC Rene: the evening before, the hip-hop pioneer was presenting his documentary ANOMALIE (Germany, 2021), at the awards ceremony, the native of Braunschweig then had his DJ Fourteen in tow for a musical interlude. In addition to songs like "Ein Tag im All," "Text von '94" and "Mein Leben ist ein Freestyle," the rapper, who is one of the best freestylers on the German-language scene, spontaneously created a new work from terms like "Braunschweig," "Kino" and "TILDA" - and the hall went wild.

The audience award "Der Heinrich" is endowed with 10.000 Euros and has been an integral part of the Braunschweig International Film Festival since 1999. Alexandra Baum-Ceisig, Director of Human Resources and Organization at main sponsor Volkswagen Financial Services, was allowed to reveal the secret of the winner. "I have always wanted to open such an envelope and announce: 'and the winner is'," said Baum-Ceisig. Strong applause was given to the German premiere of 25 YEARS OF INNOCENCE (Poland, 2020) by director Jan Holoubek. "There is nothing better than winning an audience award," Holoubek smiled into the camera via video message.

Koch: "This time has touched me very much".

The Europa, the lifetime achievement award, has been presented since 2007. It was already known in advance that it would be presented to the internationally popular actor Sebastian Koch; however, it was more than a surprise that the German

trumpeter and composer Till Brönner gave the laudatory speech. "Even though Sebastian Koch is being honored today for his life's work - this man still has an incredible amount to do," Brönner said. "Sebastian belongs to the category of world stars from Germany, he deserves my greater respect. He is a veritable master of his craft." This is also underscored by his string of awards, including, for example, the Adolf Grimme Award, the German Television Award, two Bambis and the Globo d'Oro. "The drama loves you, and the audience loves you too," praised Brönner, who has been a good friend of Koch's for many years.

For the comprehensive and very personal laudation, there was a firm embrace on stage and strong words from the visibly moved Koch. He summed up important people and encounters for him in one word: Trust. "People who met me, who trusted me. People I could trust. I was able to be open and thus allow new things to emerge." For example, with Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, director of such films as DAS LEBEN DER ANDEREN (Germany, 2006), in which Koch played the theater writer Georg Dreyman. The work won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. In closing, the newly minted "Die Europa" award winner also sent an emotional message to the room: "This city makes this festival. I have met such delightful people here who have truly carried me through these days. This time has touched me very much." "The Europa" was presented by Anthony Bandmann, member of the Board of Management of Volkswagen Financial Services.

The 35th Braunschweig International Film Festival invites you to the last festival day on Sunday, November 07. The program also includes the winning film of the Volkswagen Financial Services Film Award and "Der Heinrich" Award. Further information on the festival is available at www.filmfest-braunschweig.de, with daily updates also available on social media at www.instagram.com/filmfestivalbraunschweig and www.facebook.de/filmfestivalbraunschweig.

The Award Winners

Award	Price Money	Award Winner
Die Europa	20.000 Euros	Actor Sebastian Koch
Volkswagen Financial Services Filmpreis	10.000 Euros	THE THIRD WAR (Directed by: Giovanni Aloi)
Der Heinrich	10.000 Euros	25 YEARS OF INNOCENCE (Directed by: Jan Holoubek)
Die TILDA	5.000 Euros	HIVE (Directed by: Blerta Basholli)

Braunschweiger Filmpreis	5.000 Euros	Actress Sara Fazilat (NICO)
Queerer Filmpreis Niedersachsen	5.000 Euros	GIRLSBOYSMIX (Directed by: Lara Aerts)
Green Horizons Award	2.500 Euros	JOURNEY TO UTOPIA (Directed by: Erlend E. Mo)
KINEMA	2.000 Euros	THE THIRD WAR (Directed by: Giovanni Aloï)
Heimspiel Preis	1.000 Euros	DAS MÄDCHEN MIT DEN GOLDENEN HÄNDEN (Directed by: Katharina Marie Schubert)
	60.500 Euros	

BASIC INFORMATION

35th Braunschweig International Film Festival (BIFF)

01 - 07 November 2021

On-site at venues in Braunschweig & online via streaming platform

www.online.filmfest-braunschweig.de

Information about the 35th BIFF and the events:

www.filmfest-braunschweig.de

www.instagram.com/filmfestivalbraunschweig | [www.facebook.de/](https://www.facebook.de/filmfestivalbraunschweig)

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