



PRESS RELEASE

Full cinemas, many guests, a great atmosphere and political statements – Taking stock of the 56th Hof International Film Festival

The 56th Hof International Film Festival can rejoice in its success. Audiences are returning to the cinema. An increase in cinema admissions of 40% compared to 2021 puts film back in focus, evidenced by full cinema auditoria and the more than 700 accredited trade visitors and press representatives, twice as many as last year.

The statistics of the supplementary HoF on Demand platform illustrate this trend towards the cinema: 7,200 views in total, making just under 20% less than in 2021. This reveals that it has not yet been possible to match our total pre-pandemic audience figures, but there is a strong upward trend.

The motto this year was "SOCIETY – Change as Opportunity", illustrated by the multifaceted programme with its 126 films - 75 features and documentaries, and 51 shorts. In particular, there were themes from the current crisis areas of the world: the short films [NOGHREH](#) by Iranian Donya Madani and [INTO THE DARKNESS](#) by Mariia Shevchenko from Ukraine, whose film was facilitated by a commissioned grant from the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts together with the Friedrich Baur Foundation based in Upper Franconia.

"The great family festival of cinema is over. We saw full auditoria, happy faces and many emotional moments. This year, Hof Film Festival was all of that. Personal encounters are important, direct exchanges send important signals. Those were sent in particular by the Iranian director Donya Madani and Mariia Shevchenko from the Ukraine. Two strong women who impressed us with their courage, demonstrating what cinema can achieve. They are role models in their commitment to freedom for women and all people who are persecuted and oppressed. We are always strongest together!" says artistic director, Thorsten Schaumann.

Hybrid Normality

Hof Film Festival reached out to its audiences and, with [HoF on Demand](#), created a platform to attract additional guests to the event. In addition, barrier-free participation was enabled for all those who could not come to Hof for various reasons.

Most of the films were available for individual viewing on HoF on Demand after the German premieres, nationwide as well as for accredited persons, so constituting an additional superregional offer for all those interested in film.

With the HoF Live streaming channel, via [YouTube](#) as well as our homepage, Hof Film Festival offered an up-to-date communication interface from 10 a.m. to midnight. A varied programme was presented - up to 7 hours of self-produced and partly interactive content per day, such as director talks, panels, trailers, etc. There were 3,500 playbacks via YouTube (25% more than 2021) and 52,000 visits to the homepage (30% more than 2021).

All-round information was enabled with a wide spectrum of communication through all channels such as press, social media, website and YouTube with channel-specific formats, including short clips, film recommendations, etc. Our Film Festival presence on [TikTok](#) was also launched, with its own storyline and a new look.

Film Awards

This year, it was possible to award prize money totalling 70,000 euros. The highest endowment is the "Hof Gold Prize of the Friedrich Baur Foundation awarded by the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts in memoriam Heinz Badewitz", which is worth approximately 35,000 euros in gold. The prize went to Karsten Dahlem for [CRASH](#). The New German Cinema Award from Bavaria Film, Bayerischer Rundfunk and the DZ Bank presented 10,000 euros to Heike Fink for [OLAF JAGGER](#).

[SHADOW CHILD - ANDREAS REINER - IMAGES OF THE OTHER LIFE](#) by Jo Müller was awarded 7,500 euros along with the Granit - Hof Documentary Film Prize. The new Pharos Shiver Screen Award of 2,500 euros went to the genre film [BI ROYA \(WITHOUT HER\)](#) by Iranian director Arian Vazirdaftari. The Bild+Kunst awards for Best Set and Costume Design, each worth 2,500 euros, went to Johanna Pflaum (costume) and Thomas Lehner and Rafael Loss (set design) for their work on [MERMAIDS DON'T CRY](#). The Jury Short Film Award of the City of Hof, also endowed with 2,500 euros, went to [ANGELIQUE](#) by Elisabeth Kratzer. The Film Prize of the City of Hof 2022 was awarded to director Aelrun Goette. The non-endowed Hof Critics' Prize 2022 went to [STUMM VOR SCHRECK](#) by Daniel Popat and, for the best production, to [OLAF JAGGER](#) by Heike Fink. The Audience Short Film Prize of the City of Hof, amounting to 2,500 euros, will be awarded in the week following the end of the streaming festival (until 06.11.2022). All the prizes in 2022 can be found [here](#).

Facts

- Total duration 13 days (six days in-person event plus 7 stream days with almost all films on demand),
- An average of 14,000 visitors in Hof's cinemas over six days, signifying an increase of 40% by comparison to the previous year
- The same number of premieres as in previous years
- Films available with Q&As online after their cinema premieres
- Presentation of ten prizes totalling 70,000 euros, incl. the new [Pharos Shiver Screen Award](#)
- A superregional audience could be reached through the HoF on Demand platform, an offer for not-yet-Hof-fans.
- Approx. 7,200 film downloads on HoF on Demand by accredited and non-accredited viewers

- Retro-homage to [Roland Reber+Kollektiv](#)
- [OUT OF THE BOX](#) with three unusual independent projects as world premieres
 - ONCE UPON A TIME IN GERMANY – 8mm cut-up film by Wiebke and Johannes Thomsen
 - SHAKESPEARE-MACHINE – Sonnet 66 interactive in 27 videos by Tomasz Robak
 - MEDEA 21, ELECTRA 21 and SATELLITE PROJECTS as an immersive “Cinema 2.0” experience by Asteris Kutula
- [HoF PLUS](#) accompanying programme: 35 public events in five days, master class on the topic of documentary film, interviews with more than 100 filmmakers and social media clips recorded
- Our own HoF Streaming channel: 11 hours live streaming each festival day, 7 hours produced per day of our own content relating to the festival, 3,500 plays on the HoF YouTube channel, more than 52,000 visits to the streaming channel and the Filmtage website,
- Info about the films and the festival can be accessed [here](#)
- All recorded live streams on the [Filmtage YouTube channel](#)

We would like to thank all our guests for this exciting and, above all, emotional 56th Hof International Film Festival. Special appreciation goes to our many sponsors and supporters.

We are looking forward to the 57th Hof International Film Festival from 24th to 29th October 2023!

Best regards

Ana Radica & the Hof Film Festival Team

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