

Press release | Jury Statements | 9 November 2025

Awards of the International Competition

Jury of the International Competition

Riina Mikkonen (FI), Executive director & programmer, Tampere Film Festival

Michela Pini (CH), Producer, Cinédokké film productions

Deepti DCunha (IN), International programme consultant, Red Sea Film Festival

Samuel Suffren (HT), Filmmaker and producer

Dennis Vetter (DE), Film critic, artistic codirector, Woche der Kritik

Grand Prize of the International Competition

«Morgenkreis» (Canada 2025) by Basma al-Sharif

CHF 12 000.–, donated by Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur

Berlin in 2025 – Basma al-Sharif presents the postwar urban landscape as a space of questioning and self-questioning. A space of contrasts and negotiations, where many experiences coexist but remain fractured and untranslatable. Between language and bureaucracy, reality and fiction, critique and caricature, the film unfolds and invites us to introspection. It convinced us with its political sharpness, its commitment to the restlessness of young eyes and minds, and its radical opposition to easy images and narratives on crisis and migration. We had no doubts about awarding Basma al-Sharif the Grand Prize of the 29th Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur.

Promotional Award of the International Competition

«Loynes» (United Kingdom/North Macedonia/France/Belgium 2025) by Dorian Jespers

CHF 10 000.–, donated by the City of Winterthur

Court room scenes and dream sequences have been part of cinema's DNA for decades. In this film, they are reborn, transformed, folded, and unfolded like a «cadavre exquis». «Loynes» shows us the world as if we had never seen it before, with a rare lightness and energy, embedded in a search for unknown ways of imagining matters of life and death, the laws of the body, the laws of nature. At a time when democracies are turned on their heads, and the politics of the past seem to haunt the present, the director chooses a timeless court trial as the setting for a Kafkaesque farce. We admire the filmmaker's commitment to his vision and award Dorian Jespers as the best emerging director – as an artist who asks today how we might discover the cinema of tomorrow.

Prix George for the Best Documentary Form in the International Competition

«I Can't Think of Anything Right Now» (Germany/Argentina/Lebanon 2025) by Hussen Ibraheem

CHF 10 000.–, donated by the Volkart Foundation

How do you keep and remember the most precious moments of your life? By divine mistake, the protagonist travels through his identity with images and sounds and has to rediscover himself. The jury loved how the film «I Can't Think of Anything Right Now» succeeded in materializing memories and loss in such an elegant, mesmerizing, and touching way.

Candidacy for the European Film Awards (EFA)

«Solenopsis Invicta» (France 2025) by Victor Missud

The film «Solenopsis Invicta» asks questions that have no answers but shows us possibilities for different species to live together harmoniously. A peaceful Sicilian garden becomes a sanctuary for humans, plants, and animals. Documentary and science fiction are combined here in a clever way, offering the viewer a surreal, absurd story with touching protagonists, blending humour and tenderness. We decided to nominate the film for the European Film Awards so that it may give many of us the courage to advocate for peace.

Awards of the Swiss Competition

Jury of the Swiss Competition

Zsuzsi Bánkuti (HU), Head of Open Doors, Locarno Film Festival

Florian Fernandez (FR), Head of Short Film Corner Cannes, programming consultant (FNC Montreal), associate programmer (SXSW, documentary shorts), distributor (Solal Films)

Wouter Jansen (NL), Distributor, Square Eyes

Award for the Best Swiss Film

«Always Wanted to Be God, Never Wanted to Do Good» (Switzerland 2025) by Marvin Merkel and Noa Epars

CHF 10 000.–, donated by SUISSIMAGE and SSA

Marvin Merkel und Noa Epars präsentierten uns einen höchst authentischen und punkigen Film. Sie bringen zwei Figuren auf der Leinwand zusammen, verbunden durch ihre aktivistische Haltung gegenüber den religiösen Botschaften, die ihnen im Laufe ihres Leben aufgezwungen wurden. Ein politischer Film, der von einem spielerischen Geist und leichten Ton getragen wird und uns daher immer wieder mit neuen Wendungen überraschte.

ZKB Audience Award

«Stefi» (Switzerland 2025) by Dejan Barac

CHF 10 000.–, donated by Zürcher Kantonalbank

Swiss Film School Day

The jury of the Swiss Competition gives feedback to the students and selects the winner of the Award for the Best Swiss School Film.

Award for the Best Swiss School Film

«Entre câes e lobos» (Switzerland 2025) by Khalissa Akadi and Mathilde Sauvère

CHF 5000.–, donated by SRG SSR

Through an ethical approach and a caring gaze, the film builds a portrait led by trust. It listens as much as it reveals and transforms personal trauma into collective resonance. With deep ethical awareness, the filmmakers immerse us into this world and stand beside the protagonist, allowing emotion, silence, and rage to coexist with dignity.

Special Mention I, Swiss Film School Day

«Ouais.» (Switzerland 2025) by Della Miranda

Della manages to tell a personal story with an important message in a minimal way, never underestimating her audience. A physical and textured stop-motion work that makes use of just a small space, without letting this limit the film in any way.

Special Mention II, Swiss Film School Day

«Cuxhaven» (Switzerland 2025) by Charlyne Genoud

With the intimacy of a personal diary and a light, reflective tone, the film takes us on a journey both outward and inward. Thanks to the filmmaker's subtle direction and vision, the protagonist's quiet escape transforms into a tender meditation on memory, family, and the landscapes of introspection.

Awards for the Best Films in the Section Sparks

Sparks Jury

Pamina Schenk (19)

Ella Gfeller (16)

Remo Toggweiler (16)

Award for the Best Film in the Section Sparks

«Marina» (Italy 2025) by Paoli De Luca

CHF 2000.–, donated by Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur

This film moved us. It won us over with its expressive colours, the actors' performances, and captivating camera work. And then there's that one scene that particularly stuck in our minds: rich blue shades, rising bubbles, and everything in slow motion. In a world where negative stories currently predominate, we found it all the more important to choose a hopeful short film that sends a spark into the world. The film inspired us to experience something like this ourselves and be a part of it.

Industry Awards

Postproduction-Award

Jury

Nina Cutkovic, Jingle Jungle Tonstudios

Christof Hächler, Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur

Eva Schweizer, SRF Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen

«Threads of a Veil» by Manuel Karel Seiler and Diana Köpplová

CHF 10 000.–, in-kind prize, donated by Jingle Jungle Tonstudios

«Threads of a Veil» takes us to Kortina, a marginalized Roma settlement in Slovakia. Kortina is often reduced to stories of crime and poverty. But this short film aims to show a different side of this community, focusing on the women and their solidarity with each another. They shoulder the burdens of everyday life in this settlement. In a well-structured, carefully crafted outline, the team approaches these sensitive topics with the nuance they deserve, giving the community visibility and a voice. What convinced us is that Manuel Karel Seiler and Diana Köpplová found a surprising way of gaining access to this community of women: through tattoos. As they show one

protagonist tattooing the women, they create space for stories and intimate moments. Manuel Karel Seiler and his team have demonstrated a great deal of talent with «Zimni monology» and «1:10», and we are excited to see them embark on a new, promising project with «Threads of a Veil». Congratulations to Manuel Karel Seiler and Diana Köpplová and their film «Threads of a Veil».

P.AiR.S Project Development Residency 2026

Jury

Corinna Dästner, Producer, DokLab (CH)

Morgane Frund, Head of Industry, Solothurner Filmtage (CH)

Stina Werenfels, Filmmaker (CH)

«Tenz» by Aiyana de Vree

This lively pitch really convinced the jury. The topic of men's insecurity about their masculinity provides a fertile playground and an opportunity to examine male identity and vulnerability in a humorous way. The project also explores hybrid forms that include live action, fiction, and anime. At the same time, its research approach through group interviews adds a thoughtful documentary value to the story. Seemingly light in its tone, this project creates space for additional layers, such as themes of migration and diaspora. The jury feels that this residency would arrive at the right time for the filmmaker and that she will benefit from this opportunity as well as from the exchange with industry experts.

Invitation to participate in the European Short Pitch 2026

Jury

Lucie Detrain, Quinzaine des Cinéastes (FR)

Tenzin Roder, Migros Kulturprozent (CH)

Ben Thompson, Tribeca Film Festival (US)

«Affamé» de Philippe Audi-Dor

We chose «Affamé» for its captivating pitch, the clarity with which its characters were conveyed, and how the film addresses society's effects on the intimate. The film's exploration of representation, homosexuality, and the search for love and connection is likely to resonate with a wide audience. We are excited to see it realized with sex and sassiness.