



ZÜRICH
FILM
FESTIVAL

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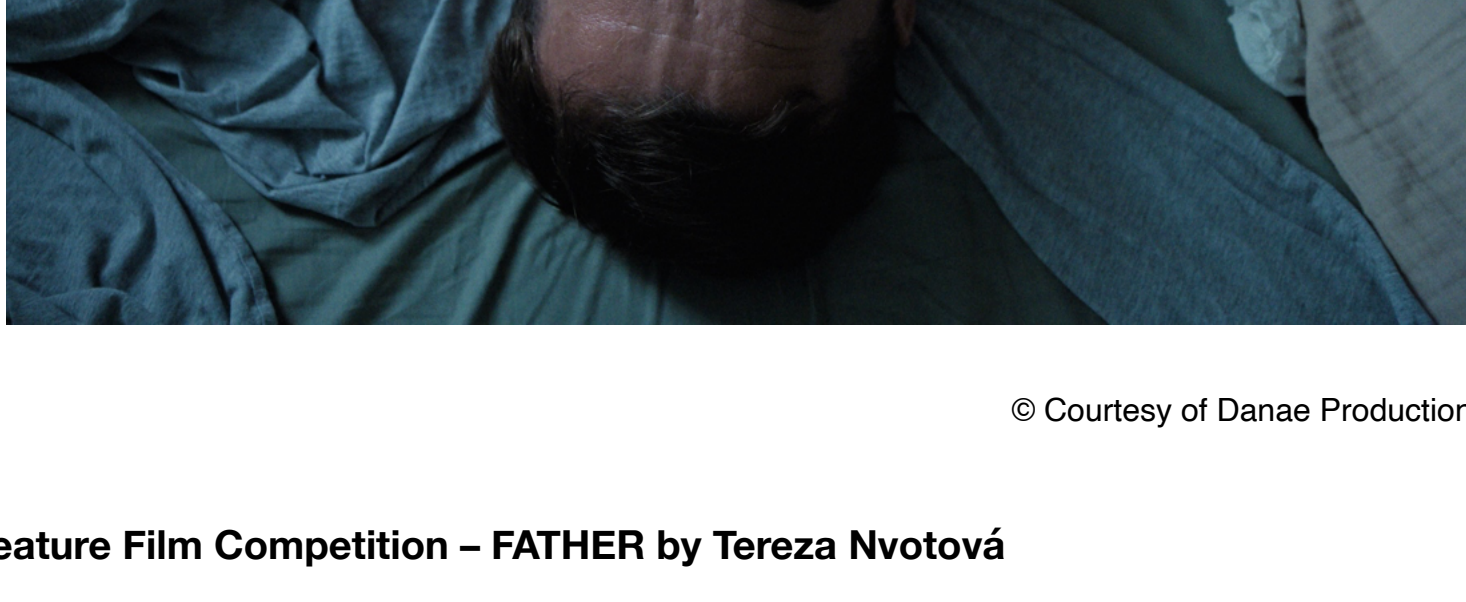
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Golden Eyes for Films from Slovakia and Switzerland

Zurich, October 4, 2025

This evening, the main prizes of the competitions at the 21st Zurich Film Festival were awarded at the Opera House. The Golden Eyes go to FATHER by Tereza Nvotová in the Feature Film Competition and I LOVE YOU, I LEAVE YOU by Zurich-based Moris Freiburghaus in the Documentary Film Competition. This marks the first time the Golden Eye in the Documentary Film Competition has been awarded to a Swiss film.

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Feature Film Competition – FATHER by Tereza Nvotová

This category showcases 14 first, second, and third feature films by emerging directors from across the globe. At the 21st Zurich Film Festival, Tereza Nvotová's FATHER received the Golden Eye award.

Jury statement:

This film tells the story of an ordinary family facing extraordinary circumstances. Its central character is neither a villain nor a hero, but a flawed human being caught in a single, devastating mistake. The film shows how that mistake can shatter what we love most, and yet it is, at its heart, about compassion, hope, and the resilience of the human spirit. We were deeply moved by the craft and the humanity of this film. It is our honor to present the Golden Eye Award to Tereza Nvotová for FATHER.

Special Mention 1:

We loved DES PREUVES D'AMOUR (LOVE LETTERS) by Alice Douard because of its brilliantly composed script, intuitive and on point direction, gorgeous acting and timely observation on what it means to prepare to bring a child into this world.

Special Mention 2:

LEFT-HANDED GIRL by Shih-Ching Tsou is a luminous gem – painful, sweet and humorous at the same time. With its carefully crafted camera work, editing pace and graceful performance from all the actors big and small it tells a convincing story that challenges traditional family values and asks how one finds its very own place in this world.

Jury:

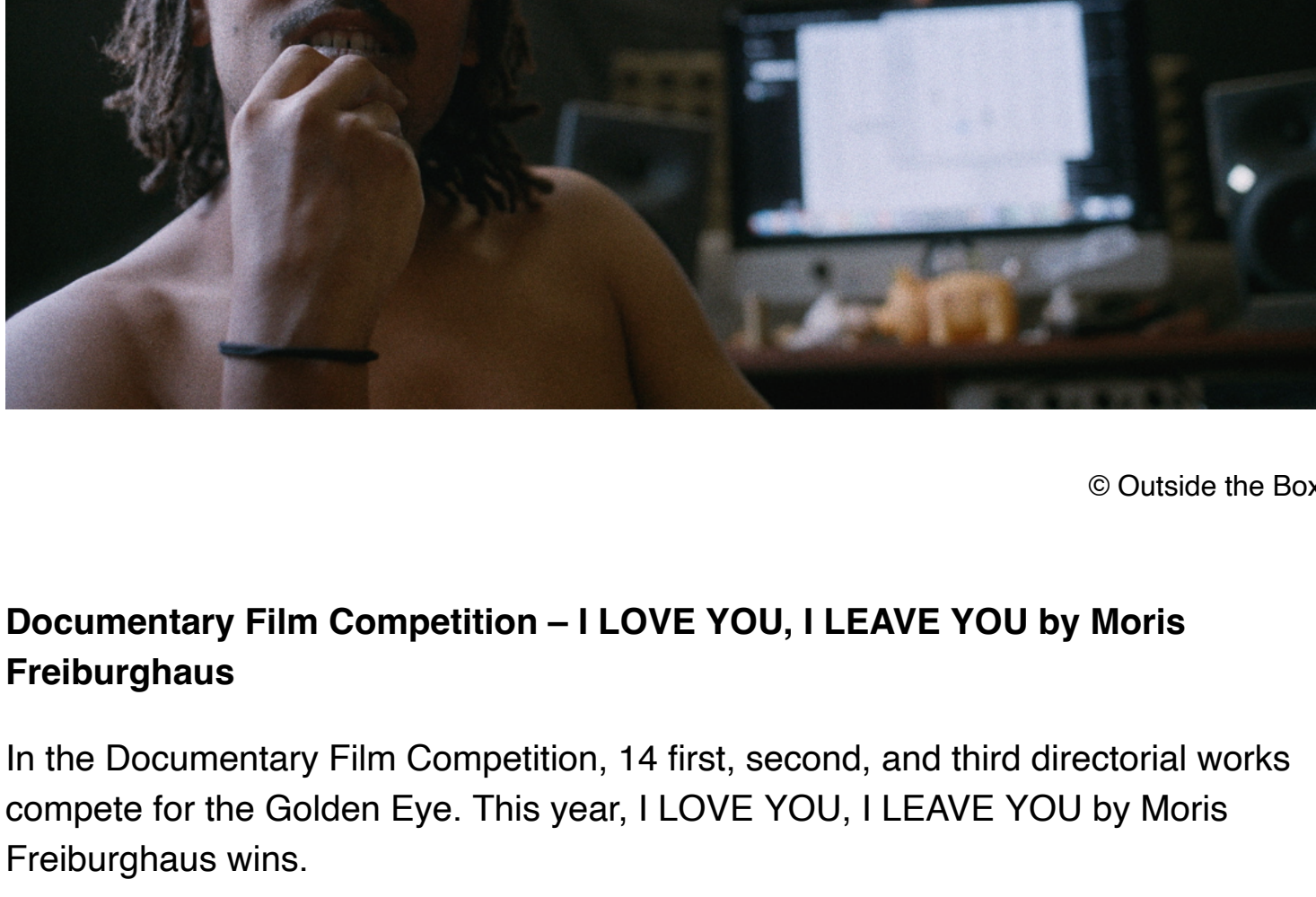
Reinaldo Marcus Green (Jury President) / Writer, Director, and Producer / USA

Leonie Benesch / Actress / Germany

Carlo Cresto-Dina / Producer / Italy

Ali Asgari / Screenwriter, Director, and Producer / Iran

Nicole Reinhard / Film Curator and Cinema Operator / Switzerland



© Outside the Box

Documentary Film Competition – I LOVE YOU, I LEAVE YOU by Moris Freiburghaus

In the Documentary Film Competition, 14 first, second, and third directorial works compete for the Golden Eye. This year, I LOVE YOU, I LEAVE YOU by Moris Freiburghaus wins.

Jury statement:

We loved all three films, but when it came to our winning film, we all agreed that we had never seen anything like it before. In capturing his best friend's battle with manic episodes over the course of a year, Moris Freiburghaus' bold directorial debut gives us an unflinching look at mental illness and the unshakeable bonds of friendship and family. For its beautifully rendered and cinematically inventive style, it's a massive honor for us to present the Golden Eye Award for Best Documentary —for the first time in the festival's history—to a Swiss film ... I LOVE YOU, I LEAVE YOU.

Special Mention 1:

The beautifully shot film THE GROUND BENEATH OUR FEET by Yrsa Roca Fannberg, filmed in an Icelandic nursing home, captures scenes of life gently transitioning into death. For its compassionate cinematography, patient editing, and calm yet powerful depiction of the beauty found at the end of life, the jury is pleased to award THE GROUND BENEATH OUR FEET a Special Mention.

Special Mention 2:

The jury appreciated the playful exuberance, painful honesty, and operatic dimension of a film that explores how the death of a parent impacts the lives of those left behind. The film was made with a daring spirit, shaped by a director deeply rooted in cinematic tradition. The jury is pleased to award a Special Mention to Namir Abdel Messeh's LIFE AFTER SIHAM.

Jury:

Matthew Heineman (Jury President) / Documentary Filmmaker, Director and Producer / USA

Odessa Rae / Producer / USA

David Osit / Director, Film Editor and Composer / USA

Katharina Bhend / Film Editor / Switzerland

Helle Faber / Producer / Denmark

ZFF Critics' Jury Award – MEMORY OF PRINCESS MUMBI by Damien Hauser received the ZFF Critics' Jury Award, chosen by the ZFF Critics' Jury as the best Swiss film in the program (excluding gala premieres).

Jury statement:

As an Afro-futuristic reinterpretation of the story of a princess, MEMORY OF PRINCESS MUMBI transforms a familiar archetype into a visionary narrative. The film is both intimate in its focus on characters and monumental in the breadth of its imagined landscapes. It plays with different genres while serving as a homage to the history of cinema – from the ghostly echoes of silent film to the contemporary engagement with AI in filmmaking. MEMORY OF PRINCESS MUMBI is whimsical, humorous, and profoundly original, laying the foundation for a new cinematic language. It is our great pleasure to honor this work with the ZFF Critics' Jury Award.

Special Mention:

Capturing manic episodes is no easy task, yet I LOVE YOU, I LEAVE YOU by Moris Freiburghaus achieves this with disarming honesty. Beyond the personal narrative, the film highlights the strain on relatives, the hesitation toward medication, the universal longing for acceptance, and the painful reality of double discrimination when minority identity and mental health intersect. It is our honor to give this exceptional documentary film a Special Mention.

ZFF Critics' Jury:

Fareyah Kaukab / Film Critic / Switzerland

Jan Küveler / Film Critic / Germany

Ben Rolph / Film Critic / England

ZFF for Kids Jury Award – DER PRANK by Benjamin Heisenberg

ZFF for Kids Audience Award – DER PRANK by Benjamin Heisenberg

Audience Award – I LOVE YOU, I LEAVE YOU by Moris Freiburghaus

Film Prize of the Churches of Zurich – LIFE AFTER SIHAM by Namir Abdel Messeh

Best International Film Music – Mikal Grigorowitsch

These honorary awards were presented at the 21st ZFF:

Golden Eye Award – Dakota Johnson

American actress and producer Dakota Johnson opened the 21st Zurich Film Festival. Together with director, actor, and producer Michael Angelo Covino, she presented their romantic comedy SPLITSVILLE at the Opening Night on September 25. During the opening gala, she was honored with the Golden Eye Award for her role in the film as well as her outstanding career.

Golden Eye Award – Benedict Cumberbatch

The ZFF honored renowned British actor Benedict Cumberbatch with the Golden Eye for his versatile career and his impressive role in the drama THE THING WITH FEATHERS, which he produced with his company SunnyMarch in collaboration with Lobo Films. Cumberbatch received the award on September 29 at Arena Cinema Sihlcity.

Golden Eye Award – Claire Foy

The 21st edition of the Zurich Film Festival awarded British actress Claire Foy the Golden Eye for her versatile career and her outstanding performance in her new film H IS FOR HAWK. The award was presented to her on September 29 at the Kongresshaus in Zurich.

Lifetime Achievement Award – Russell Crowe

The Zurich Film Festival honored actor, producer, director, musician, and Oscar winner Russell Crowe for his lifetime achievements as well as his outstanding performance in his new film NUREMBERG, in which he portrayed Nazi Hermann Göring. Crowe personally accepted the Golden Eye on September 27 at the Kongresshaus together with director James Vanderbilt.

Golden Icon Award – Colin Farrell

The Zurich Film Festival presented the outstanding actor Colin Farrell with the Golden Icon Award. He was recognized for his remarkable performance in the film BALLAD OF A SMALL PLAYER as well as his career. The Oscar-nominated actor received the award on September 27 at the Kongresshaus.

Golden Eye Award – Wagner Moura

The Zurich Film Festival honored award-winning Brazilian actor, director, and producer Wagner Moura with the Golden Eye for his career and his outstanding performance in the film THE SECRET AGENT. The award ceremony took place on September 26 at the Kongresshaus.

A Tribute To ... Award – Noah Baumbach

The 21st Zurich Film Festival tributed US director and screenwriter Noah Baumbach with the prestigious A Tribute To ... Award for his contribution to film history. The honorary award was presented to him on September 26 during the gala premiere of his new film JAY KELLY at the Kongresshaus.

Career Achievement Award – Anne Walser

Swiss film producer Anne Walser was awarded the Career Achievement Award at the 21st Zurich Film Festival for the literary adaptation STILLER and her extraordinary career. The award was presented to her on October 3 at the Kongresshaus.

Career Achievement Award – Hildur Guðnadóttir

For her career, Icelandic composer and Oscar winner Hildur Guðnadóttir was honored with the Career Achievement Award at the 21st Zurich Film Festival. The award was presented to her on October 2 during the Cinema in Concert gala at the Tonhalle Zurich.

Game Changer Award – Tom Quinn

Tom Quinn, CEO and founder of the independent production and distribution company NEON, received the Game Changer Award during this year's Zurich Summit. The festival recognized Quinn for his outstanding achievements and contributions to the film industry. He accepted the award on September 27 at Hotel Dolder.

Zurich Film Festival

The Zurich Film Festival (ZFF) is the second largest festival in the German-speaking world. Over 11 days in autumn, it presents the greatest discoveries and the year's most anticipated movies. The ZFF promotes exchange between upcoming directors, established filmmakers, the film industry and the general public. In the last 20 years, the festival has attracted a total of 1.35 million visitors. 500 of the 2,300 films screened celebrated their world or European premiere at the Zurich Film Festival.

The 21st edition will take place from 25 September to 5 October 2025.

Further information: [Zurich Film Festival](#) | [ZFF Industry](#)

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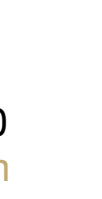
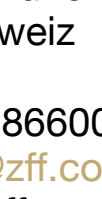
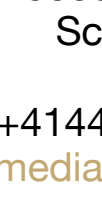
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