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Zurich Film Festival Honors Richard Linklater with the Career Achievement Award

Zurich, 18 June 2026

American filmmaker Richard Linklater will be honored at this year's Zurich Film Festival (ZFF) with the Career Achievement Award for his life's work, receiving the Golden Eye. He will accept the award in person on 28 September at the Filmpodium Zürich. The ZFF pays tribute to Linklater as one of the most influential auteur filmmakers of American independent cinema – a director whose works, including the **BEFORE** trilogy and **BOYHOOD**, have redefined cinema and shaped an entire generation. As part of the festival, the ZFF is presenting an extensive retrospective of his work in collaboration with the Filmpodium Zürich and the Cinémathèque suisse. He will also offer insights into his work during a public ZFF Masters.

Richard Linklater ranks amongst the most important voices in contemporary American cinema. With films such as **SLACKER** (1991), **DAZED AND CONFUSED** (1993), the Silver Bear-winning **BEFORE SUNRISE** (1995) and its

sequels **BEFORE SUNSET** (2004) and **BEFORE MIDNIGHT** (2013), he created works that have become classics of their genre. His epic **BOYHOOD** (2014), filmed over twelve years with the same cast, stands as a singular achievement in cinema history and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Film. His further outstanding works include **SCHOOL OF ROCK** (2003) with Jack Black, **WAKING LIFE** (2001), **A SCANNER DARKLY** (2006), and most recently **HIT MAN** (2023) and **NOUVELLE VAGUE** (2025). Linklater has collaborated with, amongst others, Ethan Hawke, Julie Delpy, Cate Blanchett, Jack Black and Matthew McConaughey.

«Richard Linklater is one of the most visionary and formative directors of American independent cinema,» says **Christian Jungen, CEO of the ZFF**. «Through naturalistic dialogue and scenes that feel plucked straight from life, he holds up a mirror to our times and regularly brings out the very best in his actors. He is also the director of my absolute favourite film, **BEFORE SUNRISE**, thanks to which I met my wife. I am therefore especially delighted to welcome him to Zurich and to share with our audiences the films that have moved me for so many years.»

Richard Linklater says: «I am truly honored to receive the Career Achievement Award from the Zurich Film Festival. When Christian and I met at the Golden Globes, I mentioned I've always wanted to attend one day and now seemed like the right time. I'm delighted that this award is the occasion that brings me there, and I very much look forward to celebrating with the European audience that has meant so much to me throughout my career.»

Retrospective in Collaboration with the Filmpodium Zürich and the Cinémathèque suisse

As part of the collaboration, the **Filmpodium Zürich** and the **Cinémathèque suisse** will present an extensive retrospective of Linklater's work – curated by these two prominent Swiss film institutions. This retrospective marks the launch of a new long-term collaboration between the ZFF, the Filmpodium Zürich and the Cinémathèque suisse. Linklater will accept the award in person on 28 September at the Filmpodium Zürich, where he will also take part in a ZFF Masters. Further program details will be announced at a later date.

Statement Nicole Reinhard, director of Filmpodium Zürich: «Few contemporary filmmakers embody a love of cinema as fully as Richard Linklater. Beyond creating an iconic body of work, he has, as a passionate cinephile and co-founder of the Austin Film Society, tirelessly championed film culture, cinema history, and independent film. As part of the new collaboration between the ZFF and the Cinémathèque suisse, we are therefore delighted to present not only a major retrospective of his work but also, with 'Cinema Seen Through the Eyes of... Richard Linklater', a journey through his personal film canon – the films that have shaped him and his work.»

Statement Vinzenz Hediger, director of the Cinémathèque suisse: «Perhaps more than any other director since Chantal Akerman, Richard Linklater has been an inventor of new forms, enriching the possibilities of cinema with each new film. Profoundly erudite and steeped in the traditions of American arts, Linklater is both a custodian and an innovator of cinema's rich legacy. The cooperation with the Zurich Film Festival opens up new possibilities for the Cinémathèque suisse's mission as Switzerland's national center for competence in film heritage.»

A Chronicler of Everyday Life

Filmmaker **Richard Linklater** is a five-time Academy Award nominee, two-time Golden Globe winner, and two-time BAFTA winner who has directed

twenty-six feature length films. Recent credits include his two 2026 Golden Globe Best Picture Nominees NOUVELLE VAGUE and BLUE MOON, as well as HITMAN (2024) and "HOMETOWN PRISON" (2024), his documentary from the HBO series GOD SAVE TEXAS (2024). In addition to the Golden Globe Best Picture nomination, NOUVELLE VAGUE received ten Cesar Award nominations, and went on to win four, including Best Director for Linklater, making him the first American to win the award.

Linklater's debut feature SLACKER screened at the Sundance Film Festival in 1991, marking his long relationship at the festival as an independent filmmaker. He followed up with his 1993 coming of age comedy DAZED AND CONFUSED, starring Matthew McConaughey in his iconic breakout role. Other work includes the BEFORE trilogy (1995, 2004 & 2013), starring frequent collaborator Ethan Hawke; SCHOOL OF ROCK (2003); ME AND ORSON WELLES (2009), BERNIE (2011), BOYHOOD, which won the BAFTA and GOLDEN GLOBE for Best Picture in 2014, EVERYBODY WANTS SOME!! (2016), and APOLLO 10 ½: A SPACE AGE CHILDHOOD (2022).

Linklater serves as the Artistic Director for the Austin Film Society, which he founded in 1985 to showcase films from around the world that were not typically shown in Austin. The Austin Film Society has grown into one of the country's largest film organizations, operating a repertory theater, managing a film studio, a public access TV studio with over 600 hundred producers, and awarding over \$3,000,000 in grants to Texas filmmakers since 1996.

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.

The 22nd edition will take place from September 24 to October 4, 2026.

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

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