

Press Release



Generation 2019: Giving the Oppressed a Voice

Selected from a pool of nearly 2,500 submissions, a total of 62 short and feature-length films from 37 production and co-production countries will be presented in the *Generation Kplus* and *Generation 14plus* programmes. Diverse in form and in content, the selection reflects upon current fundamental socio-political themes and grants young people in particular a voice. Frequently neglected and oppressed by the adult world surrounding them, many of the films' protagonists feel forced to make radical decisions, with no turning back.

"I am very pleased that we have continued to achieve such a huge increase in the popularity of the programme since the introduction of the youth film programme *14plus* at the former *Kinderfilmfest* (Children's Film Festival) in 2004 and the subsequent rechristening of the section as *Generation* in 2007. The attendance figures have risen from 15,000 back then to 70,000 today," enthuses Festival Director Dieter Kosslick.

Regarding this year's programme section head Maryanne Redpath comments, "The stars in this year's programme are self-determined beings, who are often challenged by conservative traditions and who choose to set off on new paths. Often the creativity that they discover grows out of an aimless boredom - it seems adults have nearly forgotten the great productivity that this state can engender."

Documental Forms

There is an astounding total of 12 documental works in this year's programme. Long-term studies and snapshots, intimate close-ups and respectful observations expand and contrast various perspectives on the question of what it means to grow up under the conditions of an increasingly complex world. Often employing hybrid forms, the filmmakers capture the dynamics, images and tones of environments that are reflected in the alternating urban and rural realities of the young individuals portrayed.

Short Films at *Generation*

This year, the *Generation* short film programme includes 32 productions from a total of 22 countries. A rebellious take on reality, a distinctive quality of the entire selection, has found vivid expression in the short form. A condensation of multiple perspectives and iridescent experiments, form and imagery give rise to hermetically sealed worlds. The filmmakers reflect thereby on their own work and develop an innovative approach to using the time at their disposal, in which every

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second counts.

Opening Films

Encapsulating the spirit of the section, *Generation's* opening films this year will appeal to wide audiences. Both films are equally capable of mesmerising young engaged viewers as well as open-minded adults. Makoto Nagahisa's feature-film debut *We Are Little Zombies* will open *Generation 14plus* at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, with the director and his team in attendance. In the film, four average 13½-year-old Japanese youngsters set off on a fulminant journey through their turbulent inner lives.

An adventurous trip through time and a treasure hunt through the German capital, all the way to a spot under the Devil's Mountain (Teufelsberg), await in *Cleo*, the opening film for *Generation Kplus*. Following his short films *Rhino Full Throttle* and *Berlin Metanoia* (14plus 2013 and 2016), Berlin-based director Erik Schmitt returns to delight audiences with striking stylistic choices and astonishing ingenuity.

In addition to the previously announced films, the following productions have also been invited to screen at *Generation*:

Generation 14plus

By the Name of Tania

Belgium / Netherlands

by Bénédicte Liénard, Mary Jiménez

World premiere - Documental form

The Amazon flows lazily through the goldmine-gashed landscape of northern Peru. Using real eyewitness accounts, directors Bénédicte Liénard and Mary Jiménez tell the story of a young woman who winds up in the clutches of forced prostitution when her initially hopeful attempt to escape the constrictions of her village goes wrong. Step by step, she is robbed of her moral and physical integrity. The film reconstitutes a space of dignity and returns voice and identity to a fate formally made nameless. With its powerful imagery, the girl's traumatic odyssey embodies the destruction of life in a capitalist world in connection with horrific natural devastation.

Espero tua (re)volta (Your Turn)

Brazil

by Eliza Capai

World premiere - Documental form

When numerous schools in São Paulo were slated to be closed in 2015 as a



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result of the worsening socio-political crisis, students occupied more than a thousand public buildings in an unprecedented act of self-empowerment. In her third feature-length work, Brazilian documentary filmmaker Eliza Capai shows the development of the many-voiced protests, using news excerpts, self-conducted interviews and recordings made with activists' own cell phone cameras. Starting with the first demonstrations in 2013 and continuing all the way to the election of the extreme right-wing presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro in 2018, Capai's highly political work becomes more and more relevant with each passing day.

The Magic Life of V

Finland / Denmark / Bulgaria

by Tonislav Hristov

European premiere - Documental form

The young Finn Veera attempts to come to terms with her violent childhood by means of live roleplaying. Whether as a sorceress or a warrior - she bravely confronts her antagonists and in the process gathers the strength to face her real-life tormentor. Gently and in gradual stages, Tonislav Hristov reveals where the roots of Veera's need for constant transformation lie in this intimate and personal portrait.

The Red Phallus

Bhutan / Germany / Nepal

by Tashi Gyeltshen

European premiere - Debut film

In a remote village in the vast expanses of the Himalayas, 16-year-old Sangay finds herself haunted by demons wearing blood-red masks. Her father holds on tightly to her culture's oppressive, age-old traditions: as an esteemed craftsman, he carves phalluses out of wood that are supposed to ward off evil spirits. With an archaic rhythm, this radical debut film from self-taught Bhutanese director Tashi Gyeltshen relates the girl's tragic struggle for self-determination and autonomy, set against an awe-inspiring backdrop.

Rekonstruktion Utøya (Reconstructing Utøya)

Sweden / Norway / Denmark

by Carl Javér

International premiere - Documental form

Out of competition

In a secure space and accompanied by psychologists, four survivors of the murderous rampage that took place in summer 2011 on the Norwegian island of Utøya entrust their deeply personal experiences to a group of adolescents. To cope with the trauma, scenes from the liminal zone between life and death are reconstructed in a minimalistic and haunting



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manner: the rush to flee the gunshots, the hiding, the fear. With great sensitivity and respectful distance, renowned documentary filmmaker Carl Javér depicts the shared overcoming of trauma and the awakening of a new hope.

Ringside

Germany / USA

by André Hörmann

World premiere - Documental form

The most recent work from renowned director, author and producer André Hörmann patiently and sensitively traces the paths of US-American boxing talents Kenny Jr. and Destyne Jr. Raised on Chicago's notorious South Side, the two friends and rivals begin promising careers at roughly the same time. Soon, however, their paths part. While Kenny starts to gain a foothold in the world of professional boxing, Destyne has to serve time in prison. The result is a moving story about repression, ambition, discipline and the irrepressible hope of overcoming the odds.

Shao nian de ni (Better Days)

Hong Kong / People's Republic of China

by Derek Kwok-Cheung Tsang

World premiere

Nian is trying to get into shape for the state Gaokao exam. Her chances of getting a spot at university depend on her score and the constant bullying of her classmates is not helping much. Bei's world is the street, with all its dark corners. A night-time encounter brings the shy schoolgirl together with the street-savvy trickster, Bei. When Nian's school nemesis turns up dead, the new allies come under suspicion. Derek Tsang's latest fiction feature is a wild ride, mixing the chill of a thriller with exuberant romanticism. It's a melodrama that speaks volumes about the social and political forces tugging at two young individuals in today's China.

Already announced in the previous press release ([December 19, 2018](#)):

Beol-sae (House of Hummingbird), Republic of Korea, by Bo-ra Kim, debut film – EP

The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open, Canada / Norway, by Elle-Máíja Tailfeathers, Kathleen Hepburn – WP

Bulbul Can Sing, India, by Rima Das – EP

Goldie, USA, by Sam de Jong – WP

Guo chun tian (The Crossing), People's Republic of China, by Bai Xue, debut film – EP

Hölmö nuori sydän (Stupid Young Heart), Finland / Netherlands / Sweden, by Selma Vilhunen – EP



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Knives and Skin, USA, by Jennifer Reeder – WP
We Are Little Zombies, Japan, by Makoto Nagahisa, debut film – EP

Short Films *Generation 14plus*

Cocodrilo (Crocodile), Spain, by Jorge Yúdice – WP
Four Quartets, Great Britain, by Marco Alessi – EP
Hush, New Zealand, by Armağan Ballantyne – WP
Kids, Switzerland, by Michael Frei – WP
Leaking Life, Japan, by Shunsaku Hayashi – WP
Les petites vagues (Little Waves), Canada, by Ariane Louis-Seize – IP
Liberty, USA, by Faren Humes – IP
Los rugidos que alejan la tormenta (The Roar That Keeps the Storm Away), Argentina, by Santiago Reale, documental form – WP
Mientras las olas (Meanwhile the Waves), Argentina, by Delfina Gavaldá, Carmen Rivoira – EP
Mosul 980, Iraq / USA, by Ali Mohammed Saeed – WP
Paula sans lui (About Love), France, by Maéva Berol – WP
Soeurs Jarariju (The Sisters Jarariju), Switzerland, by Jorge Cadena – IP
Story, Poland, by Jola Bańkowska – WP
Tattoo, Iran, by Farhad Delaram – WP
Tigre, France, by Delphine Deloget – IP
Yulia & Juliet, Netherlands, by Zara Dwinger – IP

Generation Kplus

2040

Australia

by Damon Gameau

World premiere - Documental form

Out of competition

Following his documentary feature debut *That Sugar Film (Generation 2015)*, prizewinning Australian director Damon Gameau returns to the Berlinale for a second appearance. In his most recent work, he sets off on a trip around the globe, pursuing the question of how a future worth living might look in the year 2040, with an eye to the man-made ecological catastrophes of the present. Conceived in the form of a visual letter to his four-year-old daughter, Gameau's *2040* combines elements of the traditional documentary film-making with unusual visual effects while approaching a subject most often treated in a dystopian manner in an optimistic and downright cheerful fashion.



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Cleo

Germany

by Erik Schmitt

World premiere - Debut film

To be able to turn back time and reverse past misfortune: Cleo's deepest desire suddenly seems to be within her grasp when she learns of a treasure map that reveals the hiding place of a magic clock. Together with chance acquaintance Paul and two quirky treasure hunters, she sets off on a topsy-turvy journey through time and across the city of Berlin. Following his short films *Rhino Full Throttle* and *Berlin Metanoia* (*Generation 14plus* 2013 and 2016) Berlin-based director Erik Schmitt returns to the *Generation* programme in his usual remarkable style with this feature-film debut.

Driveways

USA

by Andrew Ahn

World premiere

In this film, produced by Trudie Styler (director and producer of *Freak Show*, *Generation 14plus* 2017), Celine Rattray (also a producer on *Freak Show*) and James Schamus (*Indignation*, *Panorama* 2016), nearly nine-year-old Cody arrives along with his mother at the house of his deceased aunt. While his mom is busy cleaning out her late sister's house, Cody has to pass the time on his own. The introverted boy can't relate very well to the neighbour kids, but he soon forms an unusual bond with grumpy 83-year-old vet Del from next door, a friendship that touches on all of life's aspects in its casual levity. In the end, a new journey awaits.

Kok-du yi-ya-ki (Kokdu: A Story of Guardian Angels)

Republic of Korea

by Kim Tae Yong

International premiere

After *Man Chu* (*Forum* 2011), director Kim Tae Yong is making his first appearance at *Generation* this year. His most recent work, the cinematic adaptation of a Korean theatre piece, sees a turbulent fairy tale of a different kind unfold: in their attempt to recover the shoes of their dying grandmother, so innocently traded for a puppy, siblings Su-min and Dong-min accidentally end up in death's realm themselves, where they are accompanied by four kokdus - mythical creatures that assist the dead on their journey to the hereafter.



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Månelyst i Flåklypa (Louis & Luca - Mission to the Moon)

Norway

by Rasmus A. Sivertsen

International premiere

Following *Solan og Ludvig - Herfra til Flåklypa (Louis & Nolan - The Big Cheese Race) (Generation Kplus 2016)*, magpie Solan and hedgehog Ludvig are back at *Generation*. In this most recent work by animation filmmaker Rasmus A. Sivertsen, a Norwegian mission is sent to the moon under the direction of the ingenious inventor Reodor. And what could possibly go wrong when Solan tags along as a brave astronaut? Well, apparently quite a bit actually. On the tumultuous trip, stowaways are discovered, secret plans revealed - and nothing seems to work as planned.

Sune vs Sune

Sweden / Denmark

by Jon Holmberg

International premiere - Debut film

With swords drawn and powerful laser guns at the ready, ten-year-old Sune engages in fantastic battles with his younger brother and his best friend Sophie. Alas, altered realities await him when summer vacation comes to a close: a new classmate challenges him, and his name is also Sune. With great humour and well-nigh inexhaustible ingenuity, director Jon Holmberg's feature-film debut tells of the fear of failure and the all-too human approaches employed to counter it.

Where We Belong

Switzerland

by Jacqueline Zünd

World premiere - Documentary form

For Alyssia and Ilaria, every farewell is also a reunion. Just a while ago they were at the Italian Mediterranean coast, now here they are standing at a parking lot in front of an Esso gas station, waiting for their father's car to appear around the corner. Affectionately, they bid their mother good-bye for now. The two sisters' parents are separated. Just like Carleton, Sherazade and Thomas, the two girls have found their own way of dealing with the situation. Swiss documentary filmmaker Jacqueline Zünd takes plenty of time for her portraits of five very different protagonists, who have perhaps grasped more quickly than the adults that you don't have to live together to be father and mother.

Already announced in the previous press release ([December 19, 2018](#)):

Anbessa, USA / Italy, by Mo Scarpelli, documental form – WP

Baracoa, Switzerland / USA / Spain, by Pablo Briones and The Moving



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Picture Boys, documental form – WP

Daniel fait face (Daniel), France, by Marine Atlan, debut film – IP

Di yi ci de li bie (A First Farewell), People's Republic of China, by Wang Lina, debut film – EP

Kinder, Germany, by Nina Wesemann, documental form – WP

Lotte ja kadunud lohed (Lotte and the Lost Dragons), Estonia / Latvia, by Janno Põldma, Heiki Ernits – IP

Mijn bijzonder rare week met Tess (My Extraordinary Summer with Tess), Netherlands / Germany, by Steven Wouterlood, debut film – WP

Une colonie (A Colony), Canada, by Geneviève Dulude-De Celles, debut film – IP

Short Films *Generation Kplus*

Ani, New Zealand, by Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu – WP

Armed Lullaby, Germany, by Yana Ugrekhelidze – WP

City Plaza Hotel, France / Germany / Chile, by Anna Paula Hönig, Violeta Paus, documental form – IP

Dian jiao jian (Tiptoe), Taiwan, by I-Ju Lin – WP

El tamaño de las cosas (The Size of Things), Columbia, by Carlos Felipe Montoya – WP

Juste moi et toi (Just Me and You), Canada, by Sandrine Brodeur-Desrosiers – WP

Le dernier jour d'automne (The Last Day of Autumn), Switzerland / Belgium / France, by Marjolaine Perreten – WP

Los ausentes (The Absents), Mexico, by José Lomas Hervert, out of competition – EP

Magralen, Iran / Canada, by Maryam Zarei – WP

Nest, Germany, by Sonja Rohleder – WP

Oh Corbeau! Oh Corbeau! (Oh Crow! Oh Crow!), Canada, by Pierre Garcia-Rennes – WP

Pappa (Dad), Norway, by Atle S. Blakseth, Einar Dunsæd – WP

#pestverhaal (#bullyingstory), Netherlands, by Eef Hilgers, documental form – IP

Můj papírový drak (The Kite), Czech Republic / Slovak Republic / Poland, by Martin Smatana – WP

She-Pack, Norway, by Fanny Ovesen – IP

Zibilla, Switzerland / Belgium, by Isabelle Favez, out of competition – WP

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