

Romanian Days at Transilvania IFF 2023: Showcasing the latest and finest in Romanian Cinema

The selection for the **Romanian Days** at Transilvania International Film Festival 23rd edition highlights the latest and most relevant cinematic productions. This year's lineup includes 12 feature films and 10 short films competing for the three awards of the competition – Best Feature Film, Best Debut, and Best Short Film. The selection also features previously awarded Romanian films and hosts world premieres.

Emanuel Pârvu's third feature film, ***Three Kilometers to the End of the World***, makes its Romanian debut at Transilvania IFF following its premiere in the Official Competition at Cannes. The film centers on Adi, portrayed by newcomer Ciprian Chiujdea, a teenager who grapples with the revelation of a harsh truth that shakes his belief in his parents' unconditional love.

Andrei Cohn's ***Holy Week***, with its world premiere earlier this year in the Forum section at the Berlinale, draws inspiration from the Romanian writer I.L. Caragiale and uses his novella '*An Easter Torch*,' as the basis of the screenplay. The film delves into themes of racism and antisemitism, portraying a poignant narrative rooted in literary heritage.

Known for documentaries like *The Network*, *The Trial*, and *Hai, Romania!*, Claudiu Mitcu makes his fiction debut with ***Rusalka***. The story follows five friends all over 60 as they revisit the seaside resort of their adolescence. ***Rusalka*** is set for a world premiere, featuring notable performances by Maia Morgenstern and Rodica Lazăr.

Six years following his feature debut with *Charleston*, Andrei Crețulescu returns to Transilvania IFF with ***Ext. Car. Night***, world premiere. The bloody thriller combines elements of Romanian youth adventures in "Cireșarii" with the suspense of "The Twilight Zone." Crețulescu himself notes that the film is an enigma best experienced fresh: "If you already know what it's about, there's no point in watching it."

Ana-Maria Comănescu is present at the Romanian Film Days with two significant entries. She introduces a new short film in competition alongside ***Horia***, her debut feature film. ***Horia*** tells the heartfelt story of a teenager who traverses the country on a motorcycle to meet his beloved. ***Where Elephants Go***, directed by Cătălin Rotaru and Gabi Virginia Șarga, stands out as the sole Romanian film in the Official Competition at Transilvania IFF 2023. This poignant film explores the extraordinary friendship between a 9-year-old girl battling a severe illness and a bewildered young man.

Maia - Portrait with Hands is a profoundly personal film by director Alexandra Gulea, which utilizes archival footage, interviews, performances, and fictionalized elements to reconstruct the life of her grandmother, after whom she is named. This unique film provides a deep dive into her grandmother's experiences and legacy. Additionally, Isabela Tent's documentary ***Alice On & Off*** delivers an intimate, decade-long portrayal of Alice, a young woman who, at 16, has a child with a man 35 years her senior but later decides to part ways with both her partner and child.

Family discussions on sexual orientation or gender identity can quickly shift from tragic to comic tones, as proved in ***Family Weekend***, directed by Mihnea Toma. Also premiering globally is ***Night Butterflies***, directed by Andrei Răuțu. The film follows a director obsessed with the local pop star Marina Voica leading him to question himself while he follows the singer's every move.

Directed by Ilinca Călugăreanu ("Chuck Norris vs. Communism"), ***A Cautionary Tale*** presents a Kafkaesque narrative where a man tries to prove to the system that he is alive. In ***Dismissed*** (dir. George ve Gänæaard, Horia Cucută), an investigative journalist researches a corporation suspected of covering up a fire that led to an employee's death, only to uncover a suspect artificial intelligence system and a tangled tale of religious conversion.

Outside the competition, ***The Moromete Family: Life as Prey*** directed Stere Gulea will be screened, concluding the trilogy based on the novels by Marin Preda. Also premiering globally, ***Family Footage*** a documentary directed by Dan Cureau. The film uncovers hidden gems on forgotten film reels discovered in the attic of an old house in Cluj-Napoca.

Alexandru Badea's documentary ***Magnificent Sky*** offers an insightful portrait of Romanian avant-garde composers Iancu Dumitrescu and Ana-Maria Avram. Meanwhile ***Between Silence and Sin*** directed by Diana Nicolae delves into the life of poet Ana Blandiana and highlights the power of her words as a form of resistance against an oppressive regime.

Transilvania IFF also revisits some standout films, including ***Do Not Expect Too Much from the End of the World*** (dir. Radu Jude), Romania's Oscar entry. Also featured is ***Nasty*** (dir. Tudor Giurgiu, Tudor D. Popescu, Cristian Pascariu), a documentary chronicling the life and career of tennis legend Ilie Năstase, or ***Warboy*** directed by Marian Crișan, a blend of road movie and Western set in 1944.

This year's short film competition selection features 10 titles, while another 10 will be screened outside of competition.

Romanian Days are presented at TIFF with the support of The Romanian Cultural Institute, Banca Transilvania, Groupama, Jidvei

Romanian Days

Features

Family Weekend, dir. Mihnea Toma – world premiere

Night Butterflies, dir. Andrei Răuțu – world premiere

Alice On & Off, dir. Isabela Tent

Rusalka, dir. Claudiu Mitcu – world premiere

Horia, dir. Ana-Maria Comănescu

A Cautionary Tale, dir. Ilinca Călugăreanu

Maia - Portrait with Hands, dir. Alexandra Gulea

Where Elephants Go, dir. Cătălin Rotaru, Gabi Șarga

Three Kilometers to the End of the World, dir. Emanuel Pârțu

Ext. Car. Night, dir. Andrei Crețulescu – world premiere

Holy week, dir. Andrei Cohn

Dismissed, dir. George ve Gänæaard, Horia Cucută – world premiere

Short films

99,999%, dir. Roberta Șerban

Cat Funeral, dir. Ana-Maria Comănescu

Eugen, Antonia's Friend, dir. Vlăduț Iosef

FuckYouLoveYou, r. Elias Ferkin Musuret

Happy, dir. Mara Cohn

Holding It Up with the Sztroes, dir. Stroe Hana

Last Year at the North Railway Station, dir. Marin Cumatrenco

Networking, dir. Marian Fărcuț

The Cherry on Top the Boeuf Salad, d. Matei Preda

Truth or Dare, dir. Simona Borcea



**Transilvania International
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Outside competition

Features

Do Not Expect Too Much from the End of the World, dir. Radu Jude

The Moromete Family: Life as Prey, dir. Stere Gulea – world premiere

Family Footage, dir. Dan Corean – world premiere

Magnificent Sky, dir. Alexandru Badea

Between Silence and Sin, dir. Diana Nicolae

Nasty, dir. Tudor Giurgiu, Tudor D. Popescu, Cristian Pascariu

Warboy, dir. Marian Crişan

Short films

Document 56, dir. Christopher Landry

WTF Luci!, dir. Paul Radu

Don't Forget About Your Right!, dir. Cătălin Neamţu, Laura Georgescu Baron

Granny's Got A Gun, dir. Ada Dumitru, Ana Ineni

Cameras Do Not Record Such Things, dir. Alexandru Solomon

Another Spring, dir. Claudiu Mitcu

Bubble Bath, dir. Adriana Răcăşan

Double of Nothing, dir. Mihai Pîrcălabu

Claudia (working title), dir. Adrian Sitaru

Nameless Existence, dir. Andy Lupu