

Romanian Films @ Transilvania IFF.24

Cluj-Napoca, May 27, 2025. The most compelling Romanian films of the past year will be screened at the 24th edition of the **Transilvania International Film Festival**, in the much-anticipated **Romanian Days** section. This year's competition features **eight feature-length films** — including an impressive six documentaries — and **20 short films**, competing for the Best Feature Film, Best Debut, and Best Short Film awards. In addition to the competition, the program presents world premieres and acclaimed Romanian productions from the past year, screened out of competition.

The jury for the Romanian Days Feature Competition brings together acclaimed international film professionals: **Fatima Djoumer**, CEO of Europa Cinemas, **Lenka Tyrpáková**, Artistic Director of the Finále Plzeň Festival, and **Tomasz Żygo**, festival coordinator, programmer, and distributor. The Romanian Days Short Film Competition will be evaluated by **Arnaud Chevallier**, founder of the sales agency B-Rated International; **Réka Lemhényi**, one of Hungary's most renowned film editors; and producer **Christoph Thoke**.

Among the highlights is **Traffic** (dir. **Teodora Ana Mihai**), a gripping narrative inspired by the real-life art heist at Rotterdam's Kunsthall Museum, where seven masterpieces were stolen by a Romanian group. More than a retelling of a sensational crime, the film offers a poignant meditation on the lives of migrant workers in the West. Written by Cristian Mungiu, shot by Marius Panduru, and starring Anamaria Vartolomei, the film earned the Grand Prize at the Warsaw Film Festival.

Premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival, **Tata** (dirs. **Lina Vdovii, Radu Ciorniciuc**) tells the deeply personal story of a Moldovan journalist reconnecting with her estranged father in Italy. His harrowing confession of abuse suffered as a migrant worker becomes the catalyst for an emotional journey exploring memory, trauma, and reconciliation.

Another extraordinary documentary, **Bright Future** (dir. **Andra MacMasters**), offers rare insight into a surreal moment in history: the 1989 World Festival of Youth and Students held in North Korea, just before the fall of the Eastern Bloc. Through vibrant archival footage captured by Romanian cameraman Emilian Urse, the film chronicles the Romanian delegation's participation in this spectacle of propaganda and paradox.

Also built entirely from archival footage is ***Merman*** (dir. **Ana Lungu**), a playful and poignant essay film tracing three interwoven stories from WWII through the end of the Communist era. With a voice-over that shifts between irony and reflection, the film becomes a meditation on collective memory and personal history.

Love Hurts (dir. **Alexandru Mavrodineanu**), premiering at Transilvania IFF 24, is an unflinching exploration of intimacy, following two real-life couples through years of breakups, emotional pain, and the search for reconciliation. The film lays bare the complexity of romantic relationships and the delicate balance between destruction and healing.

Set on the margins of a Transylvanian village, ***Beyond the River*** (dir. **Endre David**) portrays a Roma community physically and symbolically separated from the rest of the world. Harsh and unfiltered, the documentary captures the daily struggles of a people often ignored, confronting viewers with a raw portrait of social exclusion.

In ***A Rebel Edge*** (dir. **Bogdan Puşlenghea**), viewers meet Doru Chirodea, the “most unknown poet in Timișoara,” whose bohemian life took him from underground literary circles in 1980s America back to Romania. The film is both tribute and elegy — a calm reflection on a defiant spirit confronting the twilight of rebellion.

Rounding out the competition, ***The New Year That Never Came*** marks the feature debut of acclaimed short filmmaker Bogdan Mureșanu. This tragicomic ensemble film unfolds over a single day in December 1989, on the brink of revolution. After premiering at the Venice Film Festival (Orizzonti Award and FIPRESCI Prize winner), the film swept the Gopo Awards and returns home to Romanian audiences at Transilvania IFF 24.

Out of competition, Transilvania IFF 24 will also feature the latest films by **Radu Jude**: ***Kontinental '25*** (winner of the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay at the 2025 Berlinale) and the experimental ***Sleep #2***, a found-footage film made entirely from webcam recordings and a tribute to Andy Warhol. The world premiere of ***The Spruce Forest*** by **Tudor Giurgiu** reconstructs one of the darkest pages in Romania's history: the Fântâna Albă massacre of April 1, 1941. Also premiering: ***Comatogen*** (dir. **Igor Cobileanski**), a puzzle-like moral fable told from multiple perspective; the irresistible documentary ***Tooth and Nail*** (dirs. **Mihai Dragolea**, **Radu Mocanu**), a sharp, satirical documentary, at the intersection of activism and satire; ***Caliu. Nothing Else. What Else Could I Do?*** (dir. **Simona Constantin**), a portrait of Caliu, the Clejani fiddler known as the “king of the violin”; the German-Romanian co-production ***Little Syria*** (dirs. Mădălina Roșca, Reem Karssli), a touching testimony of a Syrian family in

exile in Berlin; and ***TWST – Things We Said Today***, the latest film by **Andrei Ujică**, honored with Transilvania IFF's Excellence Award.

The Romanian Days short film selection showcases the full diversity of Romanian cinema, featuring works by emerging filmmakers recently selected for Cannes (*Alişveriş* by **Vasile Todinca** and *Milk and Cookies* by **Andrei Tache-Codreanu**), alongside new short films by established directors such as Florin Şerban, **Claudiu Mitcu**, **Octav Chelaru**, Bogdan Mureşanu (whose film *The Magician* was selected at Annecy), and **Igor Cobileanski** (*The Madman* – also premiering at Transilvania IFF 24).

Tickets and passes for Transilvania IFF 24 are available online at tiff.eventbook.ro.

The Romanian Days section at Transilvania IFF 24 is presented with the support of Banca Transilvania, Groupama, and Jidvei.

Full List of Romanian Days Films

Competition – Feature Films

- *The New Year That Never Came* (dir. Bogdan Mureşanu)
- *Traffic* (dir. Teodora Ana Mihai)
- *Bright Future* (dir. Andra MacMasters)
- *Merman* (dir. Ana Lungu)
- *Love Hurts* (dir. Alexandru Mavrodineanu)
- *Tata* (dirs. Lina Vdovii, Radu Ciorniciuc)
- *Beyond the River* (dir. Endre David)
- *A Rebel Edge* (dir. Bogdan Puşlenghea)

Competition – Short Films

- *Milk and Cookies* (dir. Andrei Tache-Codreanu)
- *Anchor* (dir. Vilmos Peter)
- *Love Is in the Air* (dir. Claudiu Mitcu)
- *Marinică, My Boy* (dir. Mihnea Toma)
- *So Refreshing* (dir. Irina Alexiu)
- *Fox Feather* (dir. Vlad Popa)
- *On the Impossibility of an Homage* (dir. Xandra Popescu)
- *Alişveriş* (dir. Vasile Todinca)

- *Celebration Day* (dir. Octavian Șaramet)
- *Grandpa Is Sleeping* (dir. Matei Branea)
- *@TikTok_Cowboy* (dir. Ștefan Anastaseu)
- *Octopus* (dir. George Dogaru)
- *The Great Union* (dir. Theodor Graur)
- *All That Remains* (dir. Andrei Redinciuc)
- *Jackpot* (dirs. Vlad Popa, Vasile Todinca)
- *Aid* (dir. Valentin Rareș Fogoroș)
- *Fracti* (dir. Lavinia Petrache)
- *Albocalmin* (dir. Florin Șerban)
- *Dance, Queen* (dir. Maria Mitulescu)
- *The Crying Girl* (dir. Octav Chelaru)

Out of Competition – Feature Films

- *TWST – Things We Said Today* (dir. Andrei Ujică)
- *Kontinental '25* (dir. Radu Jude)
- *Tooth and Nail* (dirs. Mihai Dragolea, Radu Mocanu)
- *Little Syria* (dirs. Reem Karssli, Mădălina Roșca)
- *Sleep #2* (dir. Radu Jude)
- *The Spruce Forest* (dir. Tudor Giurgiu)
- *Comatogen* (dir. Igor Cobileanski)
- *Caliu. Nothing Else. What More Could I Do?* (dir. Simona Constantin)

Out of Competition – Short Films

- *Strigoi* (dir. Márton Nagy)
- *The Magician* (dir. Bogdan Mureșanu)
- *Vali* (dir. Claudiu Mitcu)
- *The Madman* (dir. Igor Cobileanski)

The **Transilvania International Film Festival** is organized by the **Romanian Film Promotion Association** and the **Transilvania Film Festival Association**.

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International media partner: Screen Daily

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