

1 September 2021

SLASH Film Festival 2021, September 23 through October 3, 2021

AWARD-WINNING BODY-HORROR “TITANE” OPENS SLASH FILM FESTIVAL

Vienna – From September 23 through October 3, Vienna’s SLASH Film Festival invites audiences on a heart-stopping hell ride through the world of Fantastic Cinema. Opening the festival will be the Austrian premiere of the celebrated French body horror **TITANE** by Julia Ducournau (Palme d’Or, Cannes 2021). Closing it will be Valdimar Jóhannsson’s **LAMB** (Prize of Originality at Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2021), also an Austrian premiere. In its eleven days, the festival will show a total of 25 short and 55 feature films in four locations around Vienna: Stadtkino, Filmcasino, METRO Kinokulturhaus und schikaneder Kino.

OPENING FILM: TITANE (Austrian Premiere)

Year after year since its inception in 2010, SLASH Film Festival—Austria’s biggest Fantastic Cinema event—has proven that horror, science fiction, and fantasy have long left the fringe realm in the world of cinema and have come to play a lead role. In this regard, there is hardly a film better suited to open the festival’s twelfth edition than the widely celebrated **TITANE**. A treatise on identity and gender, machines and flesh, Julia Ducournau’s latest offering ignites the next rocket stage in the body horror cosmos. It is a visionary provocation with unexpectedly tender undercurrents—as profound as it is vulgar. A timely movie for the ages, and the deserved winner of this year’s Palme d’Or in Cannes. In cooperation with [Stadtkino Filmverleih](#), SLASH presents the Austrian premiere of **TITANE** on September 23 on the occasion of the festival opening at Stadtkino Wien (with additional screenings TBA).

CLOSING FILM: LAMB (Austrian Premiere)

A second Cannes favorite has also made its way into this year’s SLASH program: **LAMB**, the feature debut of Icelandic director **Valdimar Jóhannsson**, will close the festival. Bathed in mythological and folkloristic elements, this relationship drama is full of absurd humor with an ever-denser darkness looming on its horizon. It was awarded the Prize of Originality at the Un Certain Regard strand of this year’s Cannes Film Festival.

FEATURE COMPETITION

It is not only award-winning productions that are featured at SLASH—the film festival also serves as a stepping stone for up-and-coming, (still) relatively unknown directing talents. This year, the feature competition will present a selection of twelve current international titles. The winner, chosen by a high-caliber jury, will be announced on the closing night before the screening of **LAMB**.

Showing in competition is **TEDDY**, the feature debut of the French brothers **Ludovic and Zoran Boukherma**. The character-driven, witty combination of coming-of-(r)age and werewolf motifs nestled in a quirky, loveable satire about provincial life, is animated by occasional (and all the more outrageous) bursts of gore. In the Canadian production **VIOLATION**, directing duo **Madeleine Sims-**

Fewer und Dusty Mancinelli take the corset of the rape revenge drama, including the fantasies it promotes and pushes, and ground them in unflinching realism. The result is a morally ambivalent, fundamentally contradictory experience. Also in competition: **Rob Jabbaz's** Taiwanese masterpiece **THE SADNESS**, a frenetic, hard-hitting zombie thriller with fantastic analog gore effects and a melancholy, sentimental undertone.

EVEN MORE FANTASTIC THINGS

The regular festival program also gathers numerous fantastic film highlights this year. **PRISONERS OF THE GHOSTLAND** marks our screen reunion with SLASH 2018's guest of honor, Nicolas Cage. The first English-language outing of Japanese cult director **Sion Sono**, starring Cage in the leading role, is a summit of eccentric giants in a surreal post-apocalypse—as exhilarating as it is depressing, as demented as it is visionary. Somewhat jollier fare is served in **Josh Ruben's** banter-driven **WEREWOLVES WITHIN**—a laid-back whodunnit, in which a blizzard traps some townsfolk in a lodge to discuss the question: Who among them is the werewolf? An especially brilliant gem in the festival's animation section is **MAD GOD**. **Phil Tippett** is a legend of analog effects and has played a considerable role in shaping twentieth-century pop culture with his work in movies like STAR WARS or JURASSIC PARK. MAD GOD marks the first time he empties an entire cornucopia of his own ideas, visions, dreams, and nightmares into the audience's brains. A no-holds-barred, unconscionable masterpiece brimming with life—and therefore perfect for the SLASH Film Festival.

The festival's entire film program including satellite events will be available at www.slashfilmfestival.com starting September 13, 2021. Ticket presale starts September 17.

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12th SLASH Filmfestival

September, 23 through October 3, 2021

Filmcasino, METRO Kinokulturhaus, Schikaneder, Stadtkino

FILMS IN DETAIL

TITANE

D: Julia Ducournau | FR/BE 2021 | 108 mins

In the wake of her debut, *Raw*, Julia Ducournau has decided to kick things into even higher gear: *TITANE* tells the story of Alexia, a young woman who as a child had a titanium plate implanted in her head following a car crash. Now, she is fetishistically attracted to metal objects. On the run from the police, she pretends to be a young man, and soon is recognized and taken in by an old firefighter as his missing son. A treatise on identity and gender, machines and flesh, *Titane* ignites the next rocket stage in the body horror cosmos. It is a visionary provocation with unexpectedly tender undercurrents—as profound as it is vulgar. A timely movie for the ages, and rightful winner of this year's Cannes Palme d'Or.



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LAMB

D: Valdimar Jóhannsson | IS/SE/PL 2021 | 106 mins

Nestled in the harsh beauty of Iceland's landscapes is the farm of shepherds Ingvar and Maria, who, after a tragic incident, are forced to give up their wish to have children. One day, however, in their barn, a very special little lamb sees the light of day—a creature that will change Ingvar and Maria's marriage and their whole life forever. *LAMB* is a relationship drama cushioned in myth and folklore, enriched with absurd humor, and shaded by an ever-expanding darkness. With his feature debut, Valdimar Jóhannsson delivers (pun intended) an astonishing masterstroke!



THE SADNESS

D: Rob Jabbaz | TW 2021 | 99 mins

Young lovers Jim and Kat are heading toward a wonderful future, but then a virus outbreak plunges Taipei and all of Taiwan into violence and chaos. The infected are reduced to their basic instincts, leaving them hungry for human flesh and sex. When Jim and Kat are separated, both must fight for their survival, seeming more hopeless with every minute. But the two are driven by their intense urge to find each other. Rob Jabbaz's *THE SADNESS* is a frenetic, hard-hitting zombie thriller with fantastic analog gore effects and melancholy, sentimental undercurrents. A tour de force.



VIOLATION

D: Dusty Mancinelli, Madeleine Sims-Fewer | CA 2020 | 107 mins

The title says it all: Directing duo Madeleine Sims-Fewer and Dusty Mancinelli take the corset of the rape revenge drama, including the fantasies it promotes and pushes, and ground them in unflinching realism. Her marriage in crisis, Miriam decides to visit her younger sister in Canada. A madcap fling with her sister's chummy husband Dylan leads to sexual violence, which leads to a counterstrike that unravels with unnerving tranquility in a remote cabin—making this excruciating gem of a movie a morally ambivalent, fundamentally contradictory experience.

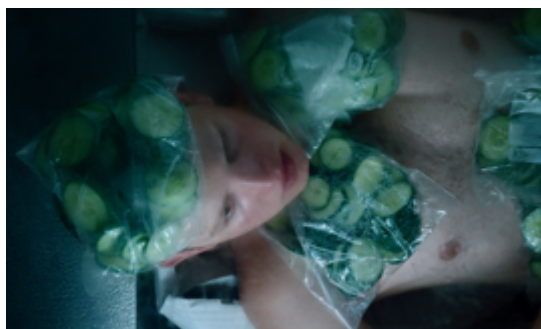


TEDDY

D: Ludovic Boukherma, Zoran Boukherma | FR 2020 | 88 mins

Teddy, a metal fan, temps at a massage parlor and suffers, like everyone else, from the intense boredom of his one-horse hometown in La France Profonde. But after being attacked by something in the woods one night, the young man begins to change. The feature debut of the brothers Ludovic and Zoran Boukherma is a character-driven, witty combination of coming-of-(r)age and werewolf motifs nestled in a quirky, loveable satire about provincial life, animated by occasional (and all the more outrageous) bursts of gore.

Film presented by THE GAP.



MAD GOD

D: Phil Tippett | US 2021 | 83 mins

Phil Tippett is a legend of analog animation, whose contribution to twentieth-century pop culture is undeniable, having worked on movies like STAR WARS and JURASSIC PARK. MAD GOD marks the first time he empties an entire cornucopia of his own ideas, visions, dreams, and nightmares into the audience's brains. Three decades in the making, this magnum opus is a gargantuan testament to the potential of pre-digital animation. Arranged as a descent into hell, populated by hundreds of monsters bleeding, grunting and shitting all over the place, MAD GOD is a no-holds-barred, unconscionable masterpiece brimming with life.



WEREWOLVES WITHIN

D: Josh Ruben | US 2021 | 97 mins

When forest ranger Finn starts his new job in the small town of Beaverfield, he gets to know its illustrious residents, who are currently at loggerheads with each other due to a proposed pipeline through the town. But such skirmishes are soon forgotten when half-eaten cadavers keep cropping up. A blizzard traps the townsfolk in a lodge, where they discuss the question: Who among them is the werewolf? WEREWOLVES WITHIN is less a creature feature than a whodunnit that allows the splendid ensemble much time for feisty banter. But fear not, there's also a lycanthrope around the corner!



PRISONERS OF THE GHOSTLAND

D: Sion Sono | US 2021 | 100 mins

Bank robber Hero must find the missing granddaughter of a mighty warlord—otherwise it's straight back to the slammer for him. Just to be safe, the warlord has the criminal squeezed into a full body black leather suit with tiny bombs attached to it. If Hero doesn't track down the young woman within five days, he will blow up. For his first English-language film, Japanese cult director Sion Sono has enlisted Nicolas Cage: a summit of eccentric giants in a surreal post-apocalypse—as exhilarating as it is depressing, as demented as it is visionary.

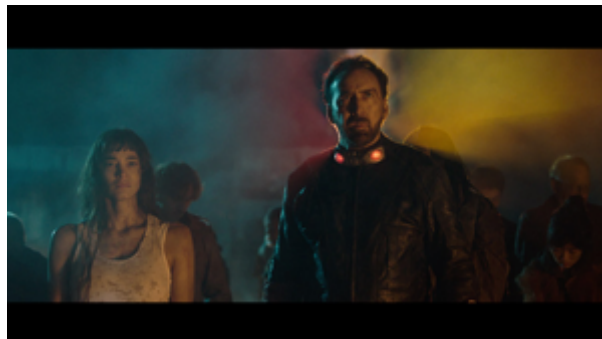


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