



Festival
Diritti
Umani
Lugano

PRESS RELEASE

FESTIVAL DIRITTI UMANI LUGANO

A Film Festival and Forum in Defence of Human Rights

Second Edition

14 - 18 October 2015

The first edition of the **Festival Diritti Umani Lugano (Lugano Human Rights Festival)** was held in September 2014 and was remarkably successful, both in terms of critical acclaim and public participation. The second edition of the Festival is currently under preparation and looks even more promising, with some important innovations and more tributes paid to specific human rights causes.

The first innovation is the Festival's new director, **Jasmin Basic**, who returns to her hometown Lugano after working for several years at key festivals such as the Geneva Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights, Visions du Réel in Nyon, and the Solothurn Film Days. Basic holds a Master in Film History and Aesthetics from the University of Lausanne and has contributed to different cultural projects in Switzerland and abroad, working with institutions such as the Geneva University of Art and Design (HEAD), the Tangiers Cinematheque, Barcelona's La Virreina, the Croatian Audiovisual Center, the Cinémathèque Française, the Cahiers du Cinéma, and Centre Georges Pompidou and Forum des Images in Paris. She has organized retrospectives on Michael Mann, Charles Burnett, David Cronenberg, Harun Farocki, Atom Egoyan and the Yugoslav Black Wave. She has developed programs and events on fiction and TV series for Festival Tous Ecrans in Geneva. She has also been a jury member at different film festivals, including Visions du Réel, Neuchâtel 's NIFFF, Lausanne's LUFF, Stuttgart, Sarajevo, Douz Doc Days (Tunisia) and Turin.

The 2015 edition of the Lugano Human Rights Film Festival will pay tribute to two important human rights causes:

- To the **Eritrean people**, victims of a totalitarian system that is guilty of crimes against humanity. The absence of individual freedoms and the torture inflicted arbitrarily in the country force people into exile. Switzerland, and Canton Ticino in particular, welcomes Eritrean migrants seeking political asylum.
- To journalist and blogger **Raif Badawi**, sentenced to 1000 lashes and 10 years in prison in Saudi Arabia, a symbol of the struggle for freedom of press and freedom of expression.

Human rights are of concern to a sizeable section of Ticino's population, as evidenced by the very positive results of the first edition of the Festival, which took place from 25 to 28 September 2014 in Lugano and attracted over 3,000 spectators, many of whom were young people, and featured an exciting programme involving local schools. The 13 films shown at the Festival included works by renowned authors, introduced by guests and speakers also of international renown,

The Lugano Human Rights Film festival aims to put the spotlight and stimulate debate on issues often covered in the news but rarely addressed with care, rigor and objectivity. Last year the quality of the films proposed, the talent of the filmmakers involved, and the contributions of invited experts all contributed to helping the public address these issues from a different angle, as did the intervention of distinguished directors such as Abderrahmane Sissako (with internationally awarded "Timbuktu") and Boris Gerrets ("Shado'man").

The 2015 edition of the Festival aims to continue on this path, in agreement with Fondazione Diritti Umani's Counsel and with the Festival's new management.

The next edition of the Festival will take place from **14 to 18 October 2015**. Moving the Festival to mid-October has helped reinforce the event's **educational programme**, following its success in 2014. The part of the programme aimed at a younger public will be **extended by two days**, for a total of three days conceived specifically for young people, with films, debates and workshops enabling students to acquire and deepen their knowledge about specific human rights issues.

The **Festival Diritti Umani Lugano** is determined to develop a rich and exciting programme. The focus will be on cinema-quality movies and on themes of clear public interest. This will also be made possible by the valuable support received from a number of institutional partners and from the national network of Festivals and Forums on Human Rights, including FIFDH Geneva and Zurich, as well as by the network established with the main NGOs active in the region.

Like last year, the Festival will be held at **CineStar**, Lugano and at **Franklin University Switzerland**.

You can follow the latest developments on the Festival's website at www.festivaldirittiumani.ch or on its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FestivalDirittiUmani.ch.

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Press Office

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