

60th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

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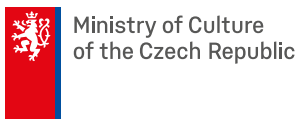
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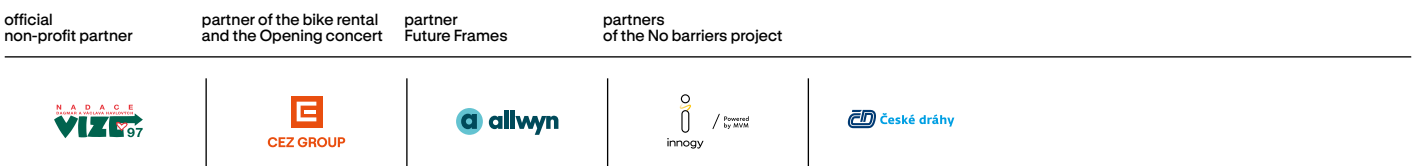
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Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

Organizer of the 60th Karlovy Vary IFF 2026: Film Servis Festival Karlovy Vary, a.s.

Organizers of the 60th Karlovy Vary IFF thank to all partners which help to organize the festival.

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Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

FINAL PRESS RELEASE

July 11th 2026

The 60th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, a non-specialized festival with two competitive categories, took place from July 3rd to July 11th 2026. It was organized by Film Servis Festival Karlovy Vary, a.s., with Kryštof Mucha as the executive director, Karel Och as its artistic director and Petr Lintimer as the head of production. The 61th Karlovy Vary IFF will be held from July 2nd to July 10th 2027. On July 11th 2026, the festival's juries presented awards for the best films at the closing ceremony of the 60th Karlovy Vary IFF.

CRYSTAL GLOBE COMPETITION

CRYSTAL GLOBE JURY

Justin Chang

Amanda Nell Eu

Pavel Rejholec

Nadia Turincev

Eskil Vogt

GRAND PRIX – CRYSTAL GLOBE (25 000 USD)

The financial award is shared equally by the director and producers of the award-winning film.

Fruit Gathering / Thit-thee Khu

Directed by: Aung Phyoe

Myanmar, Czech Republic, France, 2026

Jury Statement:

Fruit Gathering, which begins as a lush and meditative portrait of work and friendship before morphing, unexpectedly and organically, into a harrowing drama of obsession and queer desire.

SPECIAL JURY PRIZE (15 000 USD)

The financial award is shared equally by the director and producer of the award-winning film.



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The Guest / Gæsten

Directed by: Mads Mangel

Denmark, 2026

Jury Statement:

The Guest, a squirmingly funny yet precisely modulated drama that subtly raises questions about motherhood, filial duty and mental illness.

BEST DIRECTOR AWARD

Mads Mangel for the film **The Guest / Gæsten**

Denmark, 2026

Jury Statement:

Mads Mangel for *The Guest*, for giving us a seat at the table with a superb ensemble of actors, orchestrated with great intelligence and tonal assurance.

BEST ACTRESS AWARD

Anna Schinz for the role in the film **A Happy Family**

Directed by: Jan-Eric Mack

Switzerland, 2026

Jury Statement:

Anna Schinz, for her gripping, hauntingly restrained performance as a mother driven to desperate extremes.

BEST ACTOR AWARD

Ghassan Saad for the role in the film **Pipes**

Directed by: Karim Kassem

Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, 2025

Jury Statement:

Ghassan Saad, for fully inhabiting the role of a longtime village plumber who greets every setback with surprising warmth and gruff good humor.

PRÁVO AUDIENCE AWARD

Bára - Diary of a Rockstar / Bára Basiková



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Directed by: Helena Třeštíková
Czech Republic, 2026

PROXIMA COMPETITION

PROXIMA JURY

Estrella Araiza

Dirk Decker

Jakub Felcman

Devika Girish

Marija Kavtaradze

PROXIMA COMPETITION JURY COMMENT

The great American filmmaker Kelly Reichardt often describes her films as “gatherer films,” drawing on an essay by Ursula Le Guin. Titled “The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction,” the essay distinguishes between storytelling that embodies the aggressive heroism of the “hunter” and the unglamorous but gentle, careful work of the “gatherer” who focuses on everyday subsistence. For the Proxima jury, the best films in this year’s selection were those that took the latter approach—which interpreted innovation not as a matter of reaching for scale and grandiosity, but of looking closely, different quotidian realities and relationships that form the substance of our lives and yet often escape our attention.

PROXIMA GRAND PRIX (15 000 USD)

The financial award is shared equally by the director and producers of the award-winning film.

Lover, Not a Fighter / Milovník, nie bojovník

Directed by: Martina Buchelová

Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, 2026

Jury Statement:

In a world of cinema where grandiose ambitions (particularly the masculine kind) are overvalued, this beautiful film arrives tenderly, gathering the quotidian moments and relationships that make up the substance of life into a film at once thrillingly familiar and original. The director understands what it’s like to be young (she pulls off the Gen Z style without making it gimmicky, a rare feat!) and that one never stops growing up change is



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constant, bringing both wonder and loss. The jury was refreshed by the film's extraordinary lightness, how it refuses to take itself too seriously while also portraying essential themes - the absurdity of family, the delirium of young love, the apprehensions of aging - with luminous sincerity.

PROXIMA SPECIAL JURY PRIZE (10 000 USD)

The financial award is shared equally by the director and producer of the award-winning film.

Incinerator / Shokyakuro

Directed by: Shuntaro Uchida

Japan, 2026

Jury Statement:

Here is a film of deceptive simplicity — its subtlety and lightness bely layers of poetry and profundity. The director beautifully adopts the perspective of an unusual young girl who says little, but senses everything ; like a Richter scale her face records the unspoken tensions and tremulations of everyone around her. We also applaud the generosity of this film: how fully it colors its world; how it accords all its characters grace even while showing us their imperfections; and how it caresses us, the audience, with its patient, loving touch.

PROXIMA BEST DIRECTOR AWARD

Efthimis Kosemund-Sanidis for the film **A Whole Person Almost** / Enas olokliros anthropos schedon

Greece, Bulgaria, Germany, Cyprus, Romania, 2025

Jury Statement:

The Proxima Jury commends the director for using to cinema to capture and represent both: the cosmic and intimate aspects of life that cannot always be articulated or explained, but can only be deeply felt. He balances different tones with great deftness, bringing levity and a touch of magic to the serious subjects like disability, loss, and estrangement. We cannot wait to see what he does next.

PROXIMA SPECIAL MENTION

33 Steps / 33 krokov



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Režie: Anna Domček, Šimon Domček
Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, 2026

Jury Statement:

33 Steps is an audacious film—one that, though inspired by an incident of brutal bigotry, goes beyond the simple narratives of victimizer and victims. Instead of reducing those who bear the brunt of racism to mere symbols, it goes deep into their inner lives and confront hard truths: about the nonlinearity of trauma, the nature of inherited fear and the difficulty of closure in a broken society. The jury commends Milan Daniel and his family for channeling their real lives into candid and vulnerable performances that never shy away from complexity and which demand our outrage instead of pity.



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**CRYSTAL GLOBE FOR OUTSTANDING ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION
TO WORLD CINEMA**

Juliette Binoche, France

Dustin Hoffman, United States of America

Robert Richardson, United States of America

FESTIVAL PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Jesse Eisenberg, United States of America

Maggie Gyllenhaal, United States of America

Magda Vášáryová, Slovak Republic

Jeffrey Wright, United States of America



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NON-STATUTORY AWARDS

THE ECUMENICAL JURY AWARD

Since 1994 the Ecumenical Jury has awarded films from the Crystal Globe Competition that display high artistic quality while questioning social, political, ethical, and spiritual values. It promotes directors who emphasize the search for truth, justice, and hope in accordance with Christian Gospels.

THE ECUMENICAL JURY

Hans-Martin Gutmann

Lukáš Jirsa

Valérie de Marnhac

GRAND PRIZE OF THE ECUMENICAL JURY

The Lion at My Back

Directed by: Tonia Mishiali

Cyprus, Luxembourg, Greece, 2026

Jury Statement:

Through dense, realistic imagery that becomes metaphorical at key moments, the film tells the story of eighteen-year-old refugee Mariama and forty-year-old Cypriot Stella, with whom she forms an increasingly close bond.

From an ecumenical perspective, *The Lion at My Back* has a Gospel narrative. Surprisingly, Mariama becomes a Christ figure for Stella and others who, through their own strength alone, cannot find their way out of destructive domination.

EUROPA CINEMAS LABEL AWARD

Since 2003, the Europa Cinemas Label has been awarded to a European film by a jury of Europa Cinemas network exhibitors at five European festivals. It aims to increase the promotion, circulation and exhibition lifespan of winning films. The Europa Cinemas Label awards the best European film among those selected for the Crystal Globe Competition and the Proxima Competition.



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EUROPA CINEMAS LABEL JURY

Sophie Jansen

Nataša Jurčová Findrová

Grégory Le Perff

3 Weeks After / 3 nedelje posle

Directed by: Miroslav Terzić

Serbia, Bulgaria, Italy, Croatia, Luxembourg, 2026

Jury Statement:

It was a unanimous decision to award the Europa Cinemas Label to *3 Weeks After* by Miroslav Terzić.

As a jury, we had a tough decision in front of us, because all 15 films competing for our award were good in their own way, and we are three different people, each with their own taste, yet this film captivated us right from the first shot and held our attention until the very end.

The ensemble cast delivers a remarkably strong and authentic performance. The story portrays the lives of adolescents today through their own eyes, allowing their voices and perspectives to shape the narrative in a genuine and convincing way. At its core, it's fueled by group dynamics.

Miroslav Terzić's filmmaking is stunning in every aspect of its craft. The film urges us to truly hear young people, be there for them and not look away!

FIPRESCI AWARD

The International Federation of Film Critics Jury awards two FIPRESCI Prizes: to a film from the Crystal Globe Competition and a film from the Proxima Competition, for works that best promote film art and encourage new and young cinema.

FIPRESCI JURY

Wellington Almeida

Laura Arias

Shiva Fouladi

Isabel Jacobs



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Marita Nyrhinen
Giuseppe Sedia

The FIPRESCI award for the best film in the Crystal Globe Competition

Only Beautiful Things to Look At / Prameň

Directed by: Ivan Ostrochovský

Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Hungary, 2026

Jury Statement:

Ivan Ostrochovský blows the lid off a very touchy topic for bygone Czechoslovakia — the ethical implications of the state-sponsored sterilization campaign of Roma women. Steering clear of both unflexible realism and folklore, *Only Beautiful Things to Look At* is also a visually alluring nostalgic trip into the Eighties, and most of all, a story of friendship and solidarity among two strong women from different backgrounds.

The FIPRESCI award for the best film in the Proxima Competition

Petty Thieves / Sitni lopovi

Directed by: Mate Ugrin

Croatia, France, Germany, Serbia, 2026

Jury Statement:

This impressive first feature finds depth and beauty in lives too often left unseen. Through rich atmosphere, lingering observation and a seductive sense of mystery, the director crafts a quietly universal portrait of a generation caught between economic hardship, fractured human connections, and the search for belonging and dignity. It's a summer film with a dark twist, one that marks the arrival of an exciting new voice in European cinema.



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KVIFF PROMISES WINNERS

**KVIFF CENTRAL STAGE, WORKS IN DEVELOPMENT – FEATURE LAUNCH &
FOCUS QUEER, WORKS IN DEVELOPMENT – KVIFF TALENTS, BOOK-TO-SCREEN
AT KVIFF NA MFF KV 2026**

KVIFF Promises, the festival film market, showcased 38 film or series projects and literary works across 5 programmes this year.

MIDPOINT & KVIFF DEVELOPMENT AWARD (10,000 EUR)

JURY

Angeliki Vergou
Danijel Hočevár
Anamaria Antoci

They Bloom at Dawn / Cutot na zorata
Director: Angela Dimeska
North Macedonia

Jury statement: “The jury unanimously decided in favour of a project about human and family relationships in the context of an environmental crisis. It brings a community together and reminds us that personal courage and collective responsibility are closely linked.”

EURIMAGES CO-PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT AWARD (20,000 EUR)

JURY

Gyda Velvin Myklebust
Michel Plazanet
Jasmina Sijerčić

Selamlık

Director: Jerry Carlsson
Sweden, Denmark

Jury statement: “The jury decided to grant the Eurimages Co-production Development Award to a project about a love story that the war made impossible – set between past and present, between countries lost and found. It's a story that resonates strongly in today's geopolitical context, with, unfortunately, too many displaced individuals. We hope this



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award will contribute to placing *Selamlık* at the heart of the European co-production scene, where we trust its team will find dedicated collaborators to bring this powerful story to life.”

EURIMAGES SPECIAL CO-PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT AWARD (20,000 EUR)

Reminiscence / Reministsentsiia

Director: Anastasia Tykha

Ukraine

Jury statement: “This award goes to a project led by a female creative team – an emerging director and an established producer – telling a story that explores the universal themes of loss, grief and survival, with the desire to find a way to keep living in today's Ukraine. We are confident that this award, given at such an important stage of development, can help encourage other European partners to come on board with *Reminiscence*.”

CONNECTING COTTBUS AWARD

JURY

Marjorie Bendeck

Katharina Stumm

Reminiscence / Reministsentsiia

Director: Anastasia Tykha

Ukraine

Statement: “A mother and daughter disconnected in their grief, an empty apartment that holds a presence and denies its loss, fragmented memories that hit like lightning – we were very taken with this quiet and personal exploration of the consequences of war.”

ROTTERDAM LAB AWARD

JURY

Alessia Acone

Monika Matuszewska, producer of the film **Confirmation** / Bierzmowanie, Poland

Statement: “Rotterdam Lab will boost this producer's career, helping her identify her next steps in the complex producing landscape. She already has in-depth, realistic and



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empathetic knowledge of the field, and the programme will connect her with fellows who'll guide, inspire and support her."

MARCHÉ DU FILM PRODUCERS NETWORK AWARD

JURY

Yago Mateo

Alexandra Zakharchenko

Tomáš Hrubý, producer of **Cowgirl**, Czech Republic

Eva Váchová, producer of **A Few Branches Off** / Pořezat pár větví, Czech Republic

WORKS IN DEVELOPMENT – KVIFF TALENTS

KVIFF Talents is the festival's year-long programme created with the purpose of seeking out and supporting talented Czech and Slovak filmmakers and innovative audiovisual genres. It consists of two distinct sections – Feature Pool, dedicated to feature films, and Creative Pool, which supports other audiovisual genres from series through videoclips, gaming, etc.

This year, from over 100 submitted projects, the KVIFF curators chose 6 concepts – three feature films, two miniseries and one stop-motion feature film. The selected creators and creative teams presented their projects to local and international film professionals during the Industry Days. They will also receive financial support for scriptwriting, mentoring, the opportunity to create a proof-of-concept video, consultations with experts, and for feature film authors also creative residency in Karlovy Vary this fall.

Feature Pool (120,000 CZK for further development):

Exposed / Exponovaná

Director: Klára Tasovská

Czech Republic

Until We Leave / Odliv

Scriptwriter: Lucia Čížinská

Czech Republic

Nera

Director: Ivana Vogrinc Vidali

Czech Republic, Slovenia



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Creative Pool (50,000 CZK for further development):

Inhalatorium *stop-motion feature film*

Director: Bára Anna Stejskalová

Czech Republic

Burning Witches / Hon na Čarodejnice *miniseries*

Scriptwriter: Martina Babišová and Věra Starečková

Czech Republic

K-Dream *miniseries*

Director: Adam Sedlák

Czech Republic

BOOK-TO-SCREEN AT KVIFF

A new showcase in collaboration with the Frankfurt Book Fair, Moravian Library in Brno, and Book World, supported by the PPF Foundation. Book-to-Screen at KVIFF presented 8 books by authors from Central and Eastern Europe, selected by an international jury for their strong screen potential.

Playing Wolf / Cestou špendlíků nebo jehel

Author: Zuzana Říhová

Publisher: Argo, Czech Republic

The True Way Out / Skutečná cesta ven

Author: Patrik Banga

Publisher: Host, Czech Republic

Cupid at the Kremlin Wall / Kupidoni Kremlis Kedeltan

Author: Aka Morchiladze

Publisher: Sulakauri Publishing, Georgia

Aspic Bistro / Šaltienos bistro

Author: Ieva Dumbrytė

Publisher: Kitos knygos, Lithuania

The River Odyssey of Kora from Willow Meadow / Wodyseja, czyli prawdziwa historia

Kory z Wierzbowej Łąki

Author: Adam Robiński



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Publisher: Widnokrąg, Poland

Queen of Hearts / Dama de cupa

Author: Iulian Ciocan

Publisher: Polirom, Moldova

The Zone / Zóna

Author: Daniel Majling

Publisher: BRAK, Slovakia

Amadoca / Amadoka

Author: Sophia Andrukhovych

Publisher: The Old Lion Publishing House, Ukraine

INDUSTRY DAYS PARTNERS

KVIFF Industry Days are supported by the PPF Foundation and Ministry of Culture Czech Republic

Screen Focus Sessions partner: Oneplay

Media partner of KVIFF Promises: Deadline

Partners of KVIFF Central Stage: Austrian Films, Czech Film Center, German Films, Polish Film Institute, Slovenian Film Centre, Slovak Film Institute, Swiss Films, Ukrainian Institute, Soundsquare, UPP

Partners of Book-to-Screen at KVIFF: Frankfurter Buchmesse, Book World Prague, Moravian Library in Brno / Czechia Frankfurt Book Fair Guest of Honour 2026, PPF Foundation

Partners of KVIFF Talents: The ČEZ Foundation, Mattoni, Oneplay, Prima+, Krajské inovační centrum Karlovarského kraje, Forbes

Partners:

ACE Producers

Audiovisual Producers' Association

ARAS – Association of Czech Film Directors, Screenwriters and Script Editors

Barrandov Studio

Berlinale Co-production Market



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European Film Promotion
Eurimages
European Film Academy
European Producers Club
Filmmakers Europe
Global Media Makers
HBO Max
International Casting Directors Association
IFFR Pro
International Screen Institute
KVIFF.TV
MIDPOINT Institute
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STATISTICS OF THE 60th KARLOVY VARY IFF 2026

The 60th Karlovy Vary IFF 2026 was attended by 11 014 accredited visitors. Of that number 8 698 had Festival Passes, 469 were filmmakers, 1 249 accredited film professionals, and 598 journalists.

There were a total of 472 film screenings and total of 132 553 tickets were sold. A total of 179 films were screened, including 119 feature fiction films, 21 feature documentaries and 39 short films. 42 films received their world premiere, while 5 had their international premiere. 165 screenings were personally presented by delegations of filmmakers. 78 Press & Industry screenings were held.

A total of 1249 film producers, film buyers, film sellers, distributors, film festival programmers, representatives of film institutions, and other film professionals were accredited. 504 accredited film professionals came to the festival from abroad.

A total of 38 films and projects in development or production across 5 platforms were showcased to a total of 398 producers, 97 distributors and 138 film festival programmers.



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ORGANIZER OF THE 60TH KARLOVY VARY IFF 2026

Film Servis Festival Karlovy Vary, a.s.

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