

US & FRENCH CONNECTION



As part of the US & FRENCH CONNECTION program, FRENCH IN MOTION and IFP are thrilled to announce their selection for the 2020 IFP WEEK, which will be held virtually this year. They are joined in this partnership by Series Mania for the tv series, with the support of the Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC), the Cultural Services of the French Embassy In the US, and Banque Transatlantique.

IFP Week, founded in 1979, is a cornerstone of independent filmmaking and the only US market for international co-production to date. Every year, key players from the Entertainment industry (Netflix, HBO, Amazon, Warner, Sony...) rush to the East Coast to meet the rising stars of American and international indie filmmaking. Barry Jenkins, Ava DuVernay, Richard Linklater, or Laura Poitras, to name a few, were discovered there.

With US & French Connection, their bilateral annual program, French in Motion and IFP have been bringing together talent from both sides of the Atlantic since 2016. The four projects selected for the 2020 edition and whose producers/directors will get the chance to meet the US industry at Virtual IFP Week are as follows:

JORO - Narrative TV Series

Created by **Sophie Reine** (Cigarette & Chocolat, The First Day of the Rest of Your Life) & **Maxime Motte** (Les Naufragés, Comment j'ai rencontré mon père). Producer, **Virginie Lacombe, Virginie Films** (The Other Son, Faith Connection, Blockbuster, Port Authority, Mobile Homes)

What if the animals decided to recover what is rightfully theirs: the Earth? What if they had the power to take on a human appearance and to mingle with men in order to give them one last chance before declaring war on them? What if fate wanted this mission to be led by four misfit animals in their teens ?

OUR LITTLE PALESTINE - Documentary

Director, **Abdallah Al-Khatib**. Producers, **Ali Atassi, Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts** (Our Terrible Country, The Taste of Cement, Still Recording), **Jean-Laurent Csinidis, Films de Force Majeure** (A Land Imagined, Still Recording, Game Girls)

The story of a group of Palestinian civilian activists from Yarmouk, the biggest camp for Palestinian refugees in the world, near Damascus in Syria, who decided to face bombing, displacement and hunger that hit their small-besieged community through civil work, agriculture, study, music, theater, love and joy.

THE FIFTH STRING - Feature Film

Director, **Diana Toucedo** (Thirty Souls). Producer, **Andrés Díaz, Zerkalo Films** (Vacío, Land Of Milk and Honey)

The cellist and composer Felix Simonian (one of the icons of music of the former USSR) has fulfilled all of his great dreams, except for one: to play his music in space. Inspired by an ancient Armenian legend of four strings, Felix begins the search for the fifth string, the invisible one, which will lead him to fulfill his desire, and travel the world of ancient sounds.

HEARTLESS (SEM CORAÇÃO)- Feature Film, *in partnership with TorinoFilmLab.*

Directors, **Nara Normande** (Sem Coração, Guaxuma) & **TIÃO** (Sem Coração, Animal Politico). Producer, **Justin Pechberty, Les Valseurs** (Nefta Football Club, She Runs), **Émilie Lesclaux, CinemaScópio** (Aquarius, Bacurau)

Summer 1996, northeast of Brazil. In the small village of Guaxuma, Tamara enjoys her last holidays before leaving for preparatory studies to enter college. One day, she hears about a girl with a scar across her chest nicknamed Heartless. Over the summer, Tamara feels a growing attraction for this mysterious girl.

ABOUT US & FRENCH CONNECTION: US & French Connection is a year-round program created by the INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER PROJECT (IFP) in partnership with FRENCH IN MOTION, two organizations based in New York bringing together film professionals and talents. The program is designed for creatives who want to produce international feature and documentary films, as well as TV series, and who need partners on both sides of the Atlantic. The program is overseen by Esther Bensadon (French In Motion) and Gabriele Capolino, Program Producer at IFP.

ABOUT FRENCH IN MOTION: French In Motion is a New York-based organization created in May 2016 that brings together film, television and new media professionals. All occupations are represented: screenwriters, directors, producers, editors, film crews, distributors, broadcasters, etc. French In Motion connects projects and talent on both sides of the Atlantic. The program is supported by the Centre National du Cinéma (CNC) and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy. Contact : contact@frenchinmotion.org

ABOUT IFP: Founded in 1979, the Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP) champions the future of storytelling by connecting artists with essential resources at all stages of development and distribution. The organization fosters a vibrant and sustainable independent storytelling community through its year-round programs, which include IFP Week, IFP Labs, Filmmaker Magazine, IFP Gotham Awards, and the Made in NY Media Center by IFP, a new incubator space

developed with the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment located in Brooklyn. IFP represents an ever-growing network of 20,000+ storytellers around the world (alumni include Debra Granik, Andrew Haigh, Barry Jenkins, Dee Rees, and Denis Villeneuve), and plays a key role in developing 350 new fiction and nonfiction works each year.

ABOUT SERIES MANIA: Based in Lille since 2018, Series Mania - Lille / Hauts-de-France has become the biggest event dedicated uniquely to television series in Europe. Its festival offers exclusive world premieres of the greatest international series on the big screen, giving its audience - up to 72,000 spectators - 9 days of discoveries, parties and masterclasses with some of the most renowned personalities in the series world. At the same time, Series Mania welcomes 3,000 French and foreign professionals of the TV industry at Series Mania Forum and Lille Dialogues summit. Two key events for networking and business that are now extended online with the creation in 2020 of Series Mania Digital Forum.

With the support of the Center for National Cinema (CNC), the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and Banque Transatlantique.



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