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A FESTIVAL FOR EVERYONE: VIENNA SHORTS FOCUSES ON RADICAL INTIMACY AND INTRODUCES "PAY WHAT YOU CAN" – PORTRAITS FOR KURDWIN AYUB & CHRISTOPHER HARRIS

Tiered pricing for cinema tickets and festival passes – Festival theme from May 27 to June 1 explores intimacy as an act of resistance – 90 films selected for four competitions – mumok kino joins as a new venue

On May 27, the 22nd edition of the international short film festival VIENNA SHORTS will open at Vienna's Gartenbaukino. And from then on, it's time to move closer – as close as possible. "As a counter-model to a society driven by conflict and confrontation, this year we're placing increased emphasis on care and community," says Artistic Director Daniel Hadenius-Ebner. This is reflected in the festival's focus, which – under the theme **Move Closer!** – explores radical intimacy, as well as in the **newly introduced pricing system** for cinema tickets and festival passes.

Based on Sophie K. Rosa's book "Radical Intimacy", intimacy is understood here as a political space – and **relationships and solidarity as acts of resistance**. How can we radically rethink normative structures in sexuality, romantic relationships, and friendships? How do we live intimacy in digital spaces? What does self-care mean? And how can we reframe the private as a political refuge? Over six festival days – from May 27 to June 1, 2025 – around 350 films will once again be shown in Vienna's most beautiful cinemas. The full program will be released on May 8.

FESTIVAL PASSES FROM €20 AVAILABLE FROM TODAY – MUMOK ENTRY INCLUDED

Togetherness is key to the festival on many levels. Under the motto "*A Festival for Everyone*", access should be made easier for all people – regardless of age, origin, background, or income. "Based on your personal situation, **you can decide for yourself how much you can and want to pay**," VIENNA SHORTS asks for an honest self-assessment. Tiered prices for cinema **tickets range from €4 to €13**, and festival passes are available from €20. Entry is free for *nonstop* cinema subscribers, Kulturpass holders, and anyone under the age of 19.

Also new is a partnership with the Museum of Modern Art, whose mumok kino (on the 4th basement level) will be used for the first time as a festival venue. This comes with a special bonus for visitors: all **VIENNA SHORTS cinema tickets** grant **free one-time admission to mumok** during the festival period – and all mumok tickets purchased between May 8 and June 1 can be redeemed for a festival cinema ticket. The offer is valid at all festival venues and for any screening, while supplies last.

COMPETITION: 90 FILMS FROM 26 COUNTRIES COMPETE FOR OSCARS AND CASH PRIZES

About a quarter of all films shown at the festival will compete in four competitions for around €30,000 in prize money as well as qualification for the Oscars®, European Film Awards, BAFTAs, and the Austrian Film Award. In the two international competitions **Fiction & Documentary** and **Animation Avantgarde**, eleven female filmmakers will compete with eleven and ten male counterparts respectively. In the **Austrian competition** and the **Austrian Music Video Award**, a total of 17 male and 14 female directors are represented. Notably, 16 works across all competitions were created by duos or collectives. **All competition films were announced today, Monday.**

Once again, the **festival hub will be located at Vienna's MuseumsQuartier**, where alongside mumok kino, the Milieukino (a mini-cinema inside a converted truck) and an open-air screen will be in use. Additional venues include Stadtkino im Künstlerhaus, METRO Kinokulturhaus, the Austrian Film Museum, and Gartenbaukino. All industry events will be held at the Film Academy Vienna. This year's honored guests are celebrated Austrian director **Kurdwin Ayub** and U.S. film artist **Christopher Harris**.

RADICAL, REBELLIOUS, EMPATHETIC: KURDWIN AYUB & CHRISTOPHER HARRIS

Thirteen years ago, **Kurdwin Ayub** was first honored with a special at the Viennale. At the time, the director – born in Iraq and raised in Vienna – was just 22 years old and already gaining attention for her performative video works. Her pop-cultural exploration of gender clichés, authenticity, and self-staging was as radical as it was intimate, as much a sign of rebellious spirit as of empathetic insight. Her playful defiance of convention and expectations also runs through her often autobiographically influenced short films. Her first theatre piece **White Widow** provides the perfect occasion to bring her striking body of short-form work into focus.

Christopher Harris, on the other hand, is part of a select group of Black film artists who came of age at the same time and now stand at the forefront of 21st-century moving image art. Among them are notable names such as Kevin Jerome Everson, Arthur Jafa, and Cauleen Smith. Harris is the most contemplative of the group, crafting each work on a precise and carefully timed schedule, and presenting them only on select occasions. With ten films and one installation since 2000, his output may be modest — but for those who know him, it's clear: the body of work by this newly appointed professor at Princeton University is transcendent.

The portrait of Kurdwin Ayub is presented in collaboration with Wiener Festwochen, sixpackfilm & the Austrian Film Museum. The portrait of Christopher Harris is organized in partnership with the Film Museum.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

VIENNA SHORTS is the international short film festival in Vienna, making around 300 films from all over the world accessible to local audiences each spring. About one third of the films compete in four competitions for around **€30,000 in cash prizes** and for qualifications for the Oscars®, the European Film Awards, the British BAFTAs, and the Austrian Film Award.

The 22nd edition features genre films in the late-night section, audiovisual live performances, cozy open-air evenings, industry days and talent days, as well as a program for children and young audiences. Regular venues include Stadtkino im Künstlerhaus, METRO Kinokulturhaus, the Austrian Film Museum, and Gartenbaukino. The festival center is once again located at the MuseumsQuartier, where the open-air screen and the mobile Milieukino are also set up.

The full festival program will be released on May 8.

For inquiries, please contact Anna Carina Roth at presse@viennashorts.com or +43 664 5131257.

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