



Press release

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Corneliu Porumboiu, Special Guest 2025



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Visions du Réel is delighted to announce that Romanian filmmaker Corneliu Porumboiu will be the Special Guest for the 56th edition of the Festival (4 – 13 April). Corneliu Porumboiu's appearance at the next edition of the Festival will be celebrated with a masterclass and a retrospective of all his feature length works. Shot through with dark humour, Corneliu Porumboiu's films play with the absurdity integral to Romanian society, which threw off the yoke of communism with the fall of Nicolae Ceausescu and the revolution of 1989, instantly supplanting it with unbridled capitalism. Composed of major works, his filmography has made Porumboiu one of the most well-loved and respected European filmmakers of the 21st century. The full programme for the 56th edition of Visions du Réel will be released on 12 March.

Born in Vaslui (Romania) in 1975, Corneliu Porumboiu has released thirteen films (including 6 shorts), during a career which spans almost twenty years. He made a name for himself on the international scene with his first feature length film, *12:08 East of Bucharest*, winner of the prestigious Caméra d'Or at the Festival de Cannes in 2006. His feature films, which include *Police, Adjective* (2009) and *The Treasure* (2015), were also praised by critics and won other awards at Cannes, consolidating his place as a talented storyteller and as one of the greats of new Romanian cinema – alongside Cristi Puiu, Lucian Pintile, Radu Jude, Andrei Ujica or Christian Mungiu.

Inspired by a realistic, political approach, Porumboiu's cinema scrutinises Romania's recent social history, mischievously taking on its sometimes tragicomic dimension. Through dialogues infused with deadpan humour, and a discreet yet rigorous aesthetic which uses carefully composed frames and sequences of long shots, he crafts a meticulous observation of characters perplexed as they struggle to both understand a deliberately opaque reality and try and gain some sort of fulfilment from it. His most recent feature film, *The Whistlers* (2019), a dark, captivating paranoid thriller, was a critical success, and confirmed the Romanian filmmaker's love for the absurd – an aspect he sees as an integral part of his country.

Corneliu Porumboiu is also interested in the world of football, a highly personal subject since his father was a professional referee at international level. In *The Second Game* (2014), father and son commentate, within a minimalist setting, on a match from 1988 refereed by the father, in a snowstorm, under the eye of the

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Romanian propaganda TV cameras. His other documentary, *Infinite Football* (2018), is a deep dive into his home city of Vaslui, in the company of a childhood friend, now a bureaucrat in local government and obsessed with one idea: improving the rules of football or replacing it with a new, more equitable sport.

"Driven by a unique and extremely referential humour, Corneliu Porumboiu's films, which are often akin to fables, cast an offbeat, critical eye on the changes to Romanian society, yet they do so with sensitivity and great affection. He is a great filmmaker that we have dreamed of welcoming for a long time; it will be fascinating to approach his work through the prism of its relationship to non-fiction," stated Emilie Bujès, artistic director of Visions du Réel.

Biography of the filmmaker

Corneliu Porumboiu studied filmmaking at the National University of Theatre and Film in Bucharest from 1999 to 2003. In 2005, he wrote and filmed his first feature film titled *12:08 East of Bucharest*. This film was selected in the Directors' Fortnight section and won the Caméra d'Or for first film, and the Europa Cinemas Label, a prize awarded by an association of European film distributors.

In 2009, Corneliu Porumboiu wrote and filmed his second feature length, *Police, Adjective*. It won the Prix FIPRESCI and the Jury Prize in the Un Certain Regard section of the Festival de Cannes in 2009.

In 2013, Corneliu Porumboiu released his third feature film, *When Evening Falls on Bucharest or Metabolism*, which premiered at the Locarno Film Festival. He then produced the documentary *The Second Game*, which was presented at the Berlinale Forum in 2014.

His feature film *The Treasure* won the Un Certain Talent prize in the Un Certain Regard section of the Festival de Cannes in 2015. In 2018, Corneliu returned with the sports documentary *Infinite Football* which was once again included in the Berlinale Forum selection.

In 2019, he completed his fifth film, *The Whistlers*, which had its first screening at the 72nd edition of the prestigious Festival de Cannes, where it was in competition.

Save the date

12 March 2025: programme announced
4 – 13 April: 56th edition of Visions du Réel.

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56th edition of Visions du Réel: 4 – 13 April 2025

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