



Press release

Nyon, 6th March

Under Embargo until 13:00

VdR-Industry 2025: New Perspectives of a Changing World



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Visions du Réel is delighted to unveil the projects selected for the 23rd edition of VdR-Industry, the festival's four-day programme dedicated to industry professionals, with a selection of 28 projects from 28 countries, a record number of female directors, returning award-winning alumni and a host of new talent. In addition, the industry team is excited to announce our three VdR-Industry Awards juries, including new participation from Field of Vision (Sarah Choi), Berlinale (Michael Stütz) and Arizona Distribution (Bénédicte Thomas), who will be deliberating over CHF 80'000 of prizes for our official industry selection.

In 2025, 28 projects have been selected to be presented across four prestigious categories as part of Visions du Réel's industry programme. In the two showcases pitching events, 14 projects in development will be part of VdR-Pitching, presented in partnership with SRG SSR, and six projects in finishing stages will be presented at the VdR-Work In Progress. Four projects have been selected for both the VdR-Rough Cut Lab and the VdR-Development Lab respectively. An inspiring 21 projects (75%) are directed or co-directed by female directors. In its continuing commitment to supporting filmmakers of the Global South, 40% of the official industry selection represent directors and producers working in low-capacity countries, while Visions du Réel continues to maintain its reputation of launching exciting new talent into the market, with 48% of projects directed by first-time filmmakers.

Alice Burgin Head of Industry at Visions du Réel says, "After four months of selection, we are thrilled to be presenting our 2025 selection. If we can talk about a unifying factor, it must be the incredible determination of these directors and their production teams, working in increasingly complex conditions, to bring us powerful stories and strong cinematic approaches that offer us another prism in which to see the world - one which is creative, brave, passionate and even hopeful. I hope that this selection will be a welcome reminder of the incredible strength, talent and resilience of these creators, but also of the singular transformative power of a unique, auteur-led documentary cinema."

Returning Talent

This year's VdR-Industry selection once again showcases the Festival's tight bonds with its filmmaking alumni, with the return of the following creative talents.

In VdR-Pitching, we welcome back a host of familiar faces.

- **Sarvnik Kaur** (India), director of the multi-award-winning documentary *Against the Tide*, (Special Jury prize at Sundance, VdR 2023) will pitch for the first time her newest project *Disruption*, a documentary that uses a board game to explore the brutal realities of climate change, corporate greed, and identity.
- Established French director **Mariana Otero** (*History of a Secret*, VdR 2003) returns to the festival with *From One Body to Another*, an ambitious project that sees her collaborate with ten visually impaired adults with mental health issues to create a shared cinematic experience between sighted and blind individuals, transforming the perception of both.
- After the success of her film *Caiti Blues*, which premiered in VdR's Burning Lights competition in 2023 and went on to Cannes' ACID, **Justine Harbonnier** (Canada) returns with her newest project *La Simulation*, which follows 3,000 students participating in a simulation of the UN General Assembly to question the machinery of international democracy and diplomacy today.
- **Jonathan Perel** (Argentina) after presenting *Camouflage* in 2022, the Buenos-Aires based director returns to the festival with *Entre Rios*, a movie that continues to explore the subject of history, memory, place and space during the Argentinian dictatorship.

In addition to the VdR-Pitching alumni, Visions du Réel is excited to welcome the return of Algerian filmmaker **Hassen Ferhani** (*Afric Hotel*, VdR 2011, *Tarzan, Don Quichotte et nous*, VdR 2013, *Atelier* 2022) bringing his newest project *Alea Jacarandas* to VdR-Work in Progress, in which Ferhani transforms the death of his father into a moving exploration of memory and loss, creating an intimate dialogue between past and present, between literature and cinema, between a father writing and a son filming.

Mila Zhluktenko (Ukraine) & **Daniel Asadi Faezi** (Germany) who have brought their previous short films to the festival, *Find Fix Finish* for Mila Zhluktenko, VdR 2017, *The Absence of Apricots* for Daniel Asadi Faezi, VdR 2018, *waking up in silence*, VdR 2023) will present their first feature film, *Field Notes* in the VdR-Rough Cut Lab, digging through the historical layers of an old German barracks to craft a web in which past and present stories from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Germany and the USA intertwine.

Switzerland also shines in the selection with two Swiss projects. Esteemed filmmaker and journalist **Gabriel Tejedor** (*La Trace*, VdR 2014; *Rue Mayskaya*, Special mention VdR 2017; *Kombinat*, VdR 2020) examines the fallout of the war in Ukraine on its Bulgarian neighbour, exploring the impact of our new era of interstate conflict on those who live there, and who are struggling to find their bearings. Meanwhile, Beauvoir Films producer **Aline Schmidt**, who produced the multi-award-winning documentary *The Landscape & the Fury* (winner of the 2024 International Feature Film Competition Award at Visions du Réel) collaborates with Paraguayan filmmaker **Arami Ullón** (*Cloudy Times*, VdR 2014) on *Call Me When the Wind Blows*, to explore how a disconnected telephone in Japan offers a space for the bereaved to connect with their deceased loved ones. Last but not least, Swiss-American photographer Robert Frank is honoured in **Laura Israel's** (USA) first-time feature *Salut Robert*, made in production with **Ryan Krivoshey** (USA) with a never-before seen archive celebrating one of Switzerland's finest artists.

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New Talent

In addition to this strong list of alumni, the VdR–Industry programme welcomes 16 first-time directors, continuing the tradition of launching exciting new talent to the world.

- A revolutionary spy is dispatched to steal technology from his colonial oppressors in *Time Hunter*, a hybrid sci-fi co-directed by **Mushiva** (Namibia, USA) and **Daniel Chein** (USA) presenting in the VdR–Pitching.
- The pitching showcase also welcomes cognitive neuroscientist-turned-documentary filmmaker **Isa Rao** (Germany, UK), who bring us *Flotsam*, a climate parable that interweaves the fates of an ageing fisherman and a fingerling to explore the fragile interconnectedness of human and animal lives.
- Gambian-born filmmaker **Yveline Nathalie Pontalier** will also join VdR–Pitching with *I Eat With Two Hearts*, embarking on a personal journey to explore the dynamics of class, money and food and what it means to eat well.
- Co-directors **Efraín Mojica** (Mexico) & **Rebecca Zweig** (USA) will join the VdR–Work In Progress showcase with *Jaripeo*, making visible a hidden social world of queerness that exists within the Mexican rodeo scene, in order to raise questions around the constructs of masculinity that structure the community at large.

Four directors from low-production capacity countries will be taking part in the VdR–Development Lab, a nine-month incubator designed to support directors with projects at early development from the Global South. The programme, supported by the Swiss Development Cooperation, offers selected projects development financing, as well as creative support through mentoring, a lab and masterclasses across the nine months. From stories focused on Iranian censorship of LGBTQ rights in **Maryam Tafakory's** *Sukhtedel*, to a mysterious missing mathematician in **Ricardo Rodriguez Osorio's** Colombian hybrid, *P versus NP*, these filmmakers bring exciting new perspectives that can change how we think and see the world and its cinema, far beyond our European borders.

New Jury, new faces in 2025

Visions du Réel is very pleased to announce its three juries selected to oversee the awarding of over CHF 80'000 of prizes. In 2025, the VdR–Industry 2025 Jury will welcome Sarah Choi, Head of Film Development & Artist Support at Field of Vision, Michael Stütz, Co-director of Film Programming and Panorama Section Head at Berlinale, and Bénédicte Thomas, Managing Director of Arizona Distribution. The prestigious Eurimages co-production development prize, worth € 20,000, will be awarded by the Eurimages jury, made up of **Eleni Chandrinou**, producer and Greek national representative on the Eurimages Management Committee (the Council of Europe's cultural fund), **Tamara Tatishvili**, Head of Hubert Bals Fund at Rotterdam International Film Festival, and **Gianluca Matarrese**, Film director Bellota Films, Stemal Entertainment. Finally, the visions sud est jury, which awards the CHF 10,000 prize to a project from the Global South, consists of **Stefanie Rusterholz**, Co-director trigon-film, **Gaëlle Genet**, Head of programming FIFF-Fribourg International Film Festival, and **Pamela Biénzobas**, Feature films selection committee Locarno Film Festival.

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VdR–Industry projects 2025

VdR–Pitching

A Nature Documentary on Dying Birds by **Mina Laamo** (Finland)

Production: Mina Laamo, Sini Hormio (Koko Production Ltd)

Finland

Anamiga by **Raphaële Benisty** (France), **Anamiga Joseph** (France)

Production: Julie Perris (Zadig Productions)

France

Ashes Settling in Layers on the Surface by **Zoya Laktionova** (Ukraine)

Production: Natalia Libet (2Brave Productions), Victor Ede (Cinephage)

Ukraine, France

Entre Rios by **Jonathan Perel** (Argentina)

Production: Jonathan Perel (Independent)

Argentina

Call Me When the Wind Blows by **Arami Ullón** (Switzerland, Paraguay, Japan)

Production: Aline Schmid (Beauvoir Films)

Switzerland, Paraguay

Disruption by **Sarvnik Kaur** (India)

Production: Monisha Thyagarajan, Apoorva Bakshi (Awedacious Originals), Quentin Laurent

(Les Films de l'oeil sauvage)

India, France

Flotsam by **Isa Rao** (Germany)

Production: Nadira Murray (Sylph Productions), John Archer (Hopscotch Films)

United Kingdom, Scotland

From a Body to Another by **Mariana Otero** (France)

Production: Carine Chichkowsky (Survivance), Carine Ruszniewski (GoGoGo Films), Hanne

Phlypo (Clin d'oeil films)

France, Belgium

I Eat with Two Hearts by **Natyvel Pontalier** (Gabon)

Production: Mathilde Raczymow (Les Films du Bilboquet), Cyril Bibas (Centre Vidéo de

Bruxelles)

France, Belgium

Salut Robert by **Laura Israel** (United States)

Production: Ryan Krivoshey (Correspondent Productions)

United States

The Big Boom by **Gabriel Tejedor** (Switzerland)

Production : Susanne Guggenberger (Mira Film Basel)

Switzerland

The Simulation by **Justine Harbonnier** (France)

Production: Line Sander Egede (TAK films)

Canada

Time Hunter by **Daniel Chein** (United States), **Mushiva** (Namibia)

Production: David Felix Sutcliffe, Daniel Chein (Waypoint Pictures), Thomas Kaske (Seera Films),

Joel Haikali (Joe Vision Production)

United States, Germany, Namibia

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Welfare by **Adéla Komrzý** (Czech Republic)

Production: Nina Numankadić (Marina Films), Vít Komrzý (Universal Production Partners), Peter Kerekes (Kerekes Film)
Czech Republic, Slovakia

VdR–Work in Progress

Alea Jacarandas by **Hassen Ferhani** (Algeria)

Production: Eugénie Michel-Villette (Les Films du Bilboquet), Oualid Baha (Tact Production), Karim Moussaoui (Guelta Production)
France, Algeria

Emergency Measures by **André Bomfim** (Brazil)

Production: Gustavo Rosa de Moura (Mira Filmes), Alessandra Orofino (Peri)
Brazil

In Cod We Trust by **Guro Saniola Bjerk** (Norway)

Production: Benedikte Bredesen (f(x) produksjoner AS), Pasi Hakkio (Wacky Tie Films)
Norway, Finland

Jaripeo by **Efraín Mojica** (Mexico), **Rebecca Zweig** (United States)

Production: Sarah Strunin (Jaripeo Documentary LLC), Carine Chichkowsky (Survivance), Gerardo Guerra, Juan Pablo González (Tierra Roja)
United States, France, Mexico

Memory by **Vladlena Sandu** (Russia)

Production: Yanna Buryak (Mimesis), Ludovic Henry (Limitless), Raymond van der Kaaij (Revolver)
Russia, France, Netherlands

Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk by **Sepideh Farsi** (Iran)

Production: Javad Djavahery (Rêves d'Eau Productions), Annie Ohayon-Dekel (24images)
France, Palestine, Iran

VdR–Rough Cut Lab

A Distant Call by **Andrea Suwito** (Indonesia)

Production: Finbar Somers (Umbra Motion Picture Company), Mandy Marahimin (Talamedia), Xavier Rocher (La Fabrica Nocturna)
Indonesia, United Kingdom, France

Field Notes by **Daniel Asadi Faezi** (Germany), **Mila Zhluktenko** (Ukraine)

Production: Alex Gerbaulet, Caroline Kirberg (pong film)
Germany

Strange Sea by **Lala Aliyeva** (Azerbaijan)

Production: Aysel Akhundova, Lala Aliyeva (Yaman Film)
Georgia, Azerbaijan

The End of Times by **Juan David Cárdenas** (Colombia), **Bibiana Rojas Gómez** (Colombia)

Production: Luis David Esguerra Cifuentes (Bruma Cine), Juan David Cárdenas (Allegro Films)
Colombia

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VdR–Development Lab

Eleven Ears by **Yashaswini Sidlipur Raghunandan** (India)

Production: Yashaswini Sidlipur Raghunandan
India

P versus NP by **Ricardo Rodriguez Osorio** (Colombia)

Production: Fausto Tapias (Pivote Films)
Colombia

Rising Sun by **Mickael-Sitan Mbanza** (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Production: Petna Katondolo (Alkebu Film Productions), [Rosa Spaliviero](#) (Twenty Nine Studio & Production)

Democratic Republic of Congo, Belgium

Sukhte-del by **Maryam Tafakory** (Iran)

Production: Maryam Tafakory
Iran

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