

LUX Audience Award: Building cultural bridges all across Europe

As the only parliament in the world to award a film prize, the European Parliament has been shining a spotlight on European cinema every year since 2007. Over the past 15 years, the LUX Prize and its successor, the LUX Audience Award, have helped promote over 100 films, supporting the dissemination of European (co-)productions in a bid to overcome the language and distribution barriers faced by the European film industry. Prize-winners have gone on to be highly successful in the EU and beyond, making the award a synonym for quality film-making.

Supporting European cinema by all possible means

Although the number of [cinema-goers](#) in the EU (and the United Kingdom) increased by 31.5 % between 2020 and 2021, from 299 million to 394 million, 2021's level still amounts to only 40 % of the average pre-pandemic cinema attendance level registered between 2017 and 2019. Consequently, the European film sector needs all the support it can get, and this is precisely what the LUX Audience Award offers: shining a light on films that go to the heart of the EU public debate, by inviting European audiences to become active protagonists and vote for their favourite films. The 2022 edition's finalists, selected by a panel composed of film professionals and European Film Academy representatives, were publicly unveiled at the European Film Awards ceremony in December 2021 in Berlin. While the LUX Audience Award will eventually feature five films, this year again, because of the pandemic, it exceptionally features only three.

The nominees are: [Flee](#) by **Jonas Poher Rasmussen** (Denmark, France, Sweden, Norway), [Great Freedom](#) by **Sebastian Meise** (Austria, Germany), and [Quo Vadis, Aida?](#) by **Jasmila Žbanić** (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria, Netherlands, France, Poland, Norway, Germany, Romania, Turkey). War, migration and sexual identity are among the stories told, inspired by historical and real-life events.

The audiences, together with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), were invited to watch the films and vote for their favourite ones online. The winning film – receiving the highest overall ranking based on a vote by both MEPs and the public, weighted evenly at 50 % – will be announced at the award ceremony in the European Parliament on Wednesday, 8 June 2022, during the plenary session in Strasbourg.

The Lux Audience Award supports distribution, European cinema's weak spot. This also explains why the winner does not receive a direct grant. Instead, the three competing films will be subtitled in the 24 official EU languages, and screened during the [LUX Film Days](#) in more than 60 cities and at various festivals, giving thousands of Europeans a chance to see them. The winning film will also be adapted for those with visual and hearing impairments. Thus, the award offers more visibility to the finalists, allowing spectators from across the EU to watch films that might otherwise not have been screened in their country.

The 'LUX factor'

The LUX Audience Award aims to become a quality indicator for backing European film productions, and it is off to a good start. Last year, two LUX Award finalists were nominated for the Oscars in two categories: [Another Round](#) by **Thomas Vinterberg** and 2021 LUX Audience Award winner [Collective](#) by **Alexander Nanau**. In 2022, LUX Audience Award finalist [Flee](#) was the first-ever film to be nominated in three categories: Best Animated Feature, Best Documentary Feature and Best International Feature Film. Another finalist, [Quo Vadis, Aida?](#), won three European Film Awards for Best Film, Best Director and Best Actress last year, and [Great Freedom](#) won the Jury Prize in the 2021 *Un Certain Regard* section in Cannes.

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Author: Ivana Katsarova, Members' Research Service
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eprs@ep.europa.eu (contact) <http://www.eprs.ep.parl.union.eu> (intranet) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank> (internet) <http://epthinktank.eu> (blog)