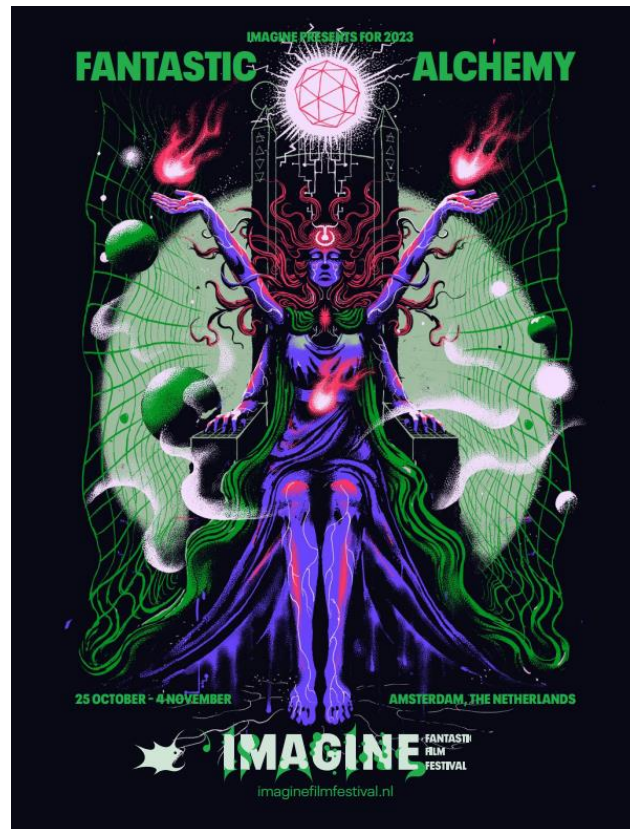




PRESS RELEASE

26 october 2023

Imagine Fantastic Film Festival festively opened with The Boy and the Heron



Until november 4 in Lab111, FilmHallen and Galerie Beeldend Gesproken, Amsterdam

Imagine Fantastic Film Festival started festively last night with an opening screening of *The Boy and the Heron* by studio Ghibli director Hayao Miyazaki. In a sold-out auditorium at FilmHallen in Amsterdam, festival director Chris Oosterom welcomed the audience and kicked off the festival. Imagine takes place from Oct. 25 through Nov. 4 at LAB111, FilmHallen and Galerie Beeldend Gesproken in Amsterdam. Tickets are available [here](#).

Special guests at the festival

Several special guests will be joining the festival for Q&As and talk shows. These include Sang Yong Lee (director of the Chunsa Film Award-winning *The Roundup*), Norman Leto (director of *Photon* which won the Best Feature Award at the Grand Jantar Festival) and director Romain de Saint-Blanquat, whose film *Bitten* is part of the festival programme.

The following special guests will be present at Imagine:



- Caye Casas – Director, *The Coffee Table* - (Q&A 28/10)
- Velasco Broca – Director, *Alegrías Riojanas* (short), also exhibition - (Q&A 29/10)
- Sean Price Williams – Director, *The Sweet East* - (Q&A 26/10)
- Talia Ryder - Lead Actress, *The Sweet East* - (Q&A 26/10)
- Graham Hughes - Director, *Hostile Dimensions* - (Q&A 28/10)
- Sang Yong Lee - Director, *The Roundup - No Way Out* - (Q&A 27/10)
- Stéphan Castang - Director, *Vincent Must Die* - (Q&A 27/10)
- Marisa Crespo, Moisés Romera - Directors-producers, *You're Not Me* - (Q&A 31/10)
- Adrien Beau - Director, *The Vourdalak* - (Q&A 29 & 30/10)
- Romain de Saint Blanquat - Director, *Bitten* - (Q&A 27/10)
- F. Javier Gutierrez - Director, *The Wait* - (Q&A 27/10)
- Sebastien Vanicek - Director, *Vermin* - (Q&A 26/10)
- Orçun Behram - Director, *The Funeral* - (Q&A 26/10)
- Anders Hultgreen - Director, *Septichexen* (short) - (Q&A 29/10)
- Yichien Lee - Director, *Tail* (short) - (Q&A 28/10)
- Lena Tsodykovskaya - Director, *Storm* (short) - (Q&A 2/11)

Contact Stefan van Erp for interview requests via stefan@triplepentertainment.nl.

Imaginary Friend VR experience

After a successful launch at the Venice Film Festival, Steye Hallema's innovative Virtual Reality experience *The Imaginary Friend* can now be experienced at Imagine in the Netherlands as well.

Self-Guided Tour in collaboration with House with the Heads

With your Imagine Film Festival movie ticket, you get 50% off admission to the Embassy of the Free Mind at the House with the Heads on Keizersgracht in Amsterdam. Here you will find one of the most important collections of books and visual materials on alchemy. Take a Self-Guided Tour and learn more!

Drag Halloween Karaoke with KJ Jacqui

This Halloween night, Imagine kicks off with karaoke in style. Under the expert direction of KJ Jacqui, host of the weekly drag karaoke night at Amsterdam's De Lellebel, all the beautiful monsters will get a golden buzzer.



More than 60 films

Imagine is screening over 60 films during this year's festival. In the line-up: the sexiest horror film of the year, *Bitten*, about a girl at boarding school who falls for a 200-year-old man, and A24's *Dream Scenario* tarring Nicolas Cage, in which dreams become nightmares. Also on the list are the 50th Anniversary of *The Exorcist*, a classic that is still as good as it was 50 years ago, *Humanist Vampire Seeking Consenting Suicidal Person*, which won the Best Film award at Venice Days, and historical action drama *Kubi*, in which Takeshi Kitano makes his comeback in front of and behind the camera. Dutch co-production *Tiger Stripes*, about a rebellious Muslim teenager, will also be shown during the festival.

The Unveiled Revolt: Monsters, Myths and Power in Iranian Genre Cinema

This country focus program was inspired by the recent uprising in Iran, primarily fueled by the oppression of women in patriarchal Iranian society. The theme focuses on how female perspectives and experiences are depicted in Iranian genre cinema. The festival does this through a film program featuring four exceptional Iranian films, which have not or rarely been shown in the Netherlands, a lecture and a panel discussion.



About Imagine Fantastic Film Festival

Imagine is the largest film festival for fantastic films in the Netherlands, featuring the best in fantasy, horror, and science fiction. Imagine is all about imagination. Every year Imagine challenges its audience to think about the future of mankind and society through imagination. This involves using the power of Fantastic film, which allows you to discover future worlds, develop a different take on reality, explore the unknown, and thus broaden your view.

Imagine sees the fantastic genre as a rich source of mental experiments, which often anticipates or reflects on social and technological developments. In in-depth programs, the festival provides background, history, and context, and connects fantastic fiction to current developments in society.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

Images can be downloaded here.

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