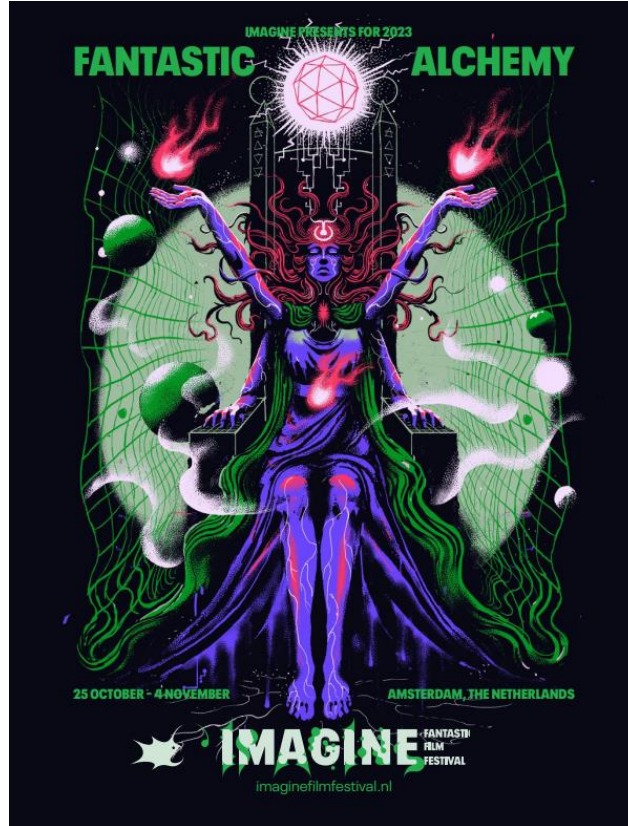




**PRESS RELEASE**  
26 September 2023

## **The Boy and the Heron opens Imagine Fantastic Film Festival**



**From October 25 to November 4 in LAB111, the FilmHallen and Galerie Beeldend Gesproken, Amsterdam**

Imagine Fantastic Film Festival proudly announces that the festival will open on Oct. 25 with the Dutch premiere of Hayao Miyazaki's *The Boy and the Heron*, a semi-autobiographical animated film about life, death, creation and friendship. *The Boy and the Heron* was created by Studio Ghibli director Miyazaki, who previously made *My Neighbour Totoro* and *Spirited Away*, for which he won an Oscar. *The Boy and the Heron* is Miyazaki's first project since his 2013 Oscar nominated film *The Wind Rises*, and will be released in the Netherlands by Paradiso Filmed Entertainment. Imagine also announce the full festival program today. Tickets are available from Oct. 4 through this link. The full Imagine Fantastic Film Festival program can be viewed [here](#).

### **The Boy and the Heron**

*The Boy and the Heron* is Miyazaki's first film since the Oscar-nominated *The Wind Rises* and is another autobiographically inspired, complex and imaginative epic. Mahito, a boy longing for his mother, steps into a world shared by both the living and the dead. In this world, death fades and life resurrects in a new guise. *The Boy and the Heron* is a semi-autobiographical fantasy that explores life, death and



creation, as a tribute to friendship, conceived by Hayao Miyazaki. *The Boy and the Heron* will be released in theaters on Dec. 27 by Paradiso Filmed Entertainment.

### **The Magic of Alchemy**

Discover the ancient secrets of alchemy through the Allard Pierson Museum's extraordinary collection. This collection contains the so-called Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, a unique collection of 10,000 manuscripts and printed works about the Hermetic tradition. In it you can read about the mysteries of the Rosicrucians, Kabbalah, Freemasonry and the Holy Grail, among others. Peter Forshaw, University Lecturer in Western esotericism at the University of Amsterdam who specializes in the relationship between alchemy and magic, will conjure the finest gems from the archives and reveal their secrets. See these authentic documents, almost never seen by the public, with your own eyes! And after this stunning presentation, watch a magical program of the finest alchemical short films, selected by Imagine Film Festival.

### **Imaginary Friend VR Experience**

Steye Hallema's innovative Virtual Reality experience *The Imaginary Friend* is coming to the Netherlands after a successful launch at the Venice Film Festival. Between October 25 and November 4, *The Imaginary Friend* can be experienced at Imagine Film Festival.

### **Self-Guided Tour in collaboration with House with the Heads**

With your Imagine Film Festival movie ticket, you'll 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!

### **Imagine Film Quiz: Fantastic Alchemy**

Fantastic movie nerds and aspiring alchemists beware! Showcase your movie knowledge during the yearly Imagine film quiz. Do you know the obscure history behind these genre film classics and all sorts of magical cinematic facts?

### **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* starring Nicolas Cage, in which dreams become nightmares. Also on the list are the 50<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **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, who's film *Bitten* is part of the festival program.



### The full list of special guests:

- Zahra Khosroshahi – keynote and panel, *The Unveiled Revolt*
- Caye Casas – director *The Coffee Table (La mesita del comedor)*
- Cristina Borobia – writer *The Coffee Table (La mesita del comedor)*
- Velasco Broca – Artist, Fantastic Alchemy exhibition and short film *Alegrías Riojanas*
- Sean Price Williams – director *The Sweet East*
- Talia Ryder – actor *The Sweet East*
- Graham Hughes – director *Hostile Dimensions*
- Sang-Yong Lee – director *The Roundup: No Way Out*
- Stéphan Castang – director *Vincent Must Die (Vincent doit mourir)*
- Adrien Beau – director *The Vourdalak (Le vourdalak)*
- Romain de Saint-Blanquat – director *Bitten (La morsure)*
- Moisés Romera and Marisa Crespo – directors *You're Not Me (Tú no eres yo)*

Please contact Stefan van Erp for interview requests: [stefan@triplepentertainment.nl](mailto:stefan@triplepentertainment.nl)

### 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.

### NOTE TO EDITORS

#### Press accreditations are open!

Would you like to report on a film or program at the festival or interview one of the special guests? Please apply through [stefan@triplepentertainment.nl](mailto:stefan@triplepentertainment.nl)

Images can be downloaded [here](#).

**For more information and interview requests:** Triple P Entertainment | Stefan van Erp | Tel: 06-24097509 | E: [stefan@triplepentertainment.nl](mailto:stefan@triplepentertainment.nl) | [www.triplepentertainment.nl](http://www.triplepentertainment.nl) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#)