

Transilvania IFF 2025: Official Competition and What's Up, Doc? line-ups revealed

Cluj-Napoca, May 21, 2025

First- and second-time directors are set to compete for top honours at the 24th edition of the **Transilvania International Film Festival**, taking place in Cluj-Napoca from June 13 to 22, 2025. Twelve films from around the world will vie for the coveted **Transilvania Trophy** and other accolades in the **Official Competition**, while ten works will compete for the top prize in the **What's Up, Doc? section**.

Spanish director **Rodrigo Cortés** (*Buried, Escape*), Estonian director **Rainer Sarnet** (*The Invisible Fight*), and Kazakh filmmaker **Adilkhan Yerzhanov** (*Yellow Cat, The Owners*) will attend the festival in June, with dedicated retrospectives. Also confirmed are Academy Award winner **Danis Tanovic** with his newest film *My Late Summer*, **Uberto Pasolini**, the British-Italian producer of *The Full Monty* and director of *Still Life* and *The Return*; Italian-Romanian executive producer **Alessandro del Vigna** (*Triangle of Sadness, The End*); and acclaimed Danish script consultant and producer **Vinca Wiedemann**, who has worked closely with auteurs such as Lars von Trier (*Melancholia, Nymphomaniac*).

Other names include Ukrainian director **Pavlo Ostrikov** and celebrated Spanish actor **Eduard Fernández**, known for roles in *Everybody Knows, The Method*, and *While at War*, and winner of four Goya Awards, including Best Actor for *Marco, the Invented Truth*.

The Official Competition

“Completely unintended, but highly plausible considering the chaos of our times, the 12 films in the Competition form a strange yet fascinating Babel—where people don’t understand each other and are at odds with the world. In the absence of a better, more conciliatory reality, art remains the only force that can positively transform this chronic lack of communication, empathy, and authenticity into something meaningful.”

— **Mihai Chirilov**, Transilvania IFF Artistic Director

The Official Competition Films:

- **To a Land Unknown** (dir. Mahdi Fleifel) – A raw refugee drama set in modern-day Athens, where two Palestinian brothers dream of reaching Germany.
- **Xoftex** (dir. Noaz Deshe) – Set in a purgatory-like refugee camp blending grim reality with psychedelic imagination.
- **Peacock** (dir. Bernhard Wenger) – An Austrian satire about identity in a hypocritical society, centered on a “Rent-A-Friend” employee.

- **The Kingdom** (dir. Julien Colonna) – A gritty Corsican thriller about survival and clan violence in the '90s.
 - **Three Days of Fish** (dir. Peter Hoogendoorn) – A gently humorous and touching father-son reunion tale.
 - **Sorda (Surzenie)** (dir. Eva Libertad) – A Spanish debut that intimately examines a deaf couple awaiting news about their newborn.
 - **Acts of Love** (dir. Jeppe Rønde) – A powerful northern drama of religious trauma and reconciliation within a cult.
 - **Rains Over Babel** (dir. Gala del Sol) – A Colombian psychedelic fantasy of identity and flamboyant self-discovery.
 - **Hysteria** (dir. Mehmet Akif Büyükcatalay) – A drama about art, morality, and chaos triggered by filming a controversial scene.
 - **The Weeping Walk** (dir. Dimitri Verhulst) – A dark comedy road movie that satirizes the journey of a quirky funeral procession.
 - **Myocardium** (dir. José Manuel Carrasco) – A Groundhog Day-esque introspective loop uncovering relational truths.
 - **Debut, or Objects of the Field of Debris, as Currently Catalogued** (dir. Julian Castronovo) – A cinematic detective story exploring the blurry lines between truth and illusion in art.
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What's Up, Doc?

In its fourth year as a competitive section, **What's Up Doc?** pushes the boundaries of the documentary form with ten films—ranging from traditional to hybrid to even fiction.

"We started from the idea of distance—physical, emotional, social, ethical. We searched for perfectly incompatible pairings, explored in diverse ways, with outcomes that remain valid no matter where you stand."

— **Crăița Nanu**, *What's Up, Doc?* Curator

The What's Up Doc? films:

- **Mistress Dispeller** (dir. Elizabeth Lo) – The most awarded entry, offering a jaw-dropping look into a real Chinese business helping women get rid of their husbands' mistresses.

- **Letters from Wolf Street** (dir. Arjun Talwar) – A poetic Indian documentary about finding home in a Warsaw neighborhood.
- **Endless Cookie** (dir. Seth & Peter Scriver) – An animated ode to love, chance, and heritage within a Canadian indigenous family.
- **Loss Adjustment** (dir. Miguel Calderón) – A Mexican docu-fiction blending art and insurance fraud in surreal harmony.
- **Invention** (dir. Courtney Stephens) – A 16mm stylized fiction debut reframing archive footage, about a father's legacy and a bizarre healing device.
- **The Flamenco Guitar of Yeraí Cortes** (dir. Antón Álvarez) – A joyful dive into musical roots and maternal love, crowned by a family secret.
- **Saturn** (dir. Daniel Tornero) – A claustrophobic portrait of a family torn by dark revelations, rendered with intense cinematic force.
- **The Return of the Projectionist** (dir. Orkhan Aghazadeh) – A fable-like tale of repairing an old film projector in rural Azerbaijan, stirring nostalgia and censorship.
- **ILOVERUSS** (dir. Tova Mozaad) – A Lynchian documentary chronicling 20 years of hope, friendship, and heartbreak for a failed Hollywood actor.
- **Make It Look Real** (dir. Danial Shah) – A subtle look at the beauty illusion industry in Pakistan, where Photoshop replaces truth.

The **Transilvania International Film Festival** is organized by the **Romanian Film Promotion Association** and the **Transilvania Film Festival Association**.

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