

PRESS RELEASE:

**THE JI.HLAVA BREAKS AN ALL-TIME ATTENDANCE RECORD. ONLINE AUDIENCE AWARD GOES
TO A SHORT FILM ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE.**

Jihlava, November 19, 2025

This year's edition of the Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival presented **305 films, 139 Q&A sessions, and 43 Inspiration Forum discussions**. A total of **110,000 viewers** watched Ji.hlava films — more than **52,000 in cinemas**, and **58,000 online**. The festival accredited a record **6,100 visitors**. The Ji.hlava Online Audience Award went to the Czech director **Nebe Motýlová** for her short film *tiny film about rape*. The **30th Ji.hlava IDFF** will take place from **October 23 to November 1, 2026**.

This year, Ji.hlava ran for the second time in a ten-day format (October 24 –November 2, 2025). *“The ten-day format proved to be the right step. We are very happy that audiences left Ji.hlava satisfied and continued watching Ji.hlava Online once they returned home. Total attendance reached around 110,000 people — roughly the same as last year — but attendance at physical screenings increased year-on-year. Ji.hlava once again became a space that brings people together across society. And I have the feeling that after the pandemic, these moments of togetherness are even more important. Documentary films help us understand the world we live in — and they also serve as a time capsule for future generations, who will understand our way of thinking and making decisions,”* said festival director Marek Hovorka.

More than 6,100 people were accredited at this year's Ji.hlava, including 1,535 film professionals. Live festival attendance exceeded 52,000, while Ji.hlava Online recorded 34,000 film views, which represents 58,000 online viewers when using the 1.7 conversion coefficient used by American streaming services.

Of the 305 screened films, 76 premiered in world premieres, 28 in international premieres, and 15 in European premieres. Out of 3,756 submitted films, 114 were selected for competition.

Films competed in 8 sections, and screenings took place across 8 cinemas in Jihlava and Třešť. The programme included 139 Q&A sessions after screenings and 43 Inspiration Forum debates.

Ji.hlava Online Audience Award: tiny film about rape

The Ji.hlava Online Audience Award was presented to the nine-minute film, ***tiny film about rape*** by Nebe Motýlová which explores the transformation of the female body into an object across the full

spectrum of sexual violence — from subtle street harassment to rape. Inventive stop-motion animation combines drawing, photography, and real objects.

The film was already recognized at the physical Ji.hlava, receiving the main award for Best Czech Experimental Film. *“The sensitively woven collage gives voice to a girl who experienced sexual violence and emphasizes the essential importance of consent and the scars it leaves. At the same time, the film follows her path toward healing,”* noted the jury.

The winning films of the 29th Ji.hlava IDFF can be found [here](#). *“This year, the juries rewarded a wide range of films — from emerging filmmakers to major names in documentary cinema. The themes span continents: from silver mines in Bolivia, the war in Ukraine, to a powerful family story set against the backdrop of Chinese capitalism. Czech documentary film demonstrated its strength, diversity, and its ability to reach a broad audience. Thematically, it touches on social, historical, personal, and contemporary subjects. Many of the Czech films will enter distribution immediately after the festival or in the near future,”* said Marek Hovorka about this year’s edition.

TOP 10 Ji.hlava Online – most viewed films

- 1/ Minimum Love**
- 2/ Open**
- 3/ Big Boys**
- 4/ Zelensky**
- 5/ Banger from the Hood**
- 6/ AMOOSED: a moose odyssey**
- 7/ Teenage Life Interrupted**
- 8/ Power Station**
- 9/ Grolich the Great**
- 10/ Unborn Father**

15th Inspiration Forum: Europe, Love, Money, Radicalization

The fifteenth edition of the Inspiration Forum was again a major success. A total of 107 Czech and international guests took part in the discussions — either in person or online — and 3,558 visitors attended the program. In total, the Forum offered 43 discussions, debates, and workshops. The Forum focused on four key issues of our time: Europe, love, money, and radicalization. Discussions explored the transformation of Europe, the power of love as a social and political force, justice within the economic system, and subtle mechanisms of digital radicalization. A defining element was the diversity of formats — from panel debates to the more intimate Inspiration Gatherings, which connected speakers with the audience in an open dialogue that encouraged shared experience and

collective reflection.

Workshops and live podcast recordings further enriched the program.

"In a world where we rarely find time and space to meet outside our everyday circles, Ji.hlava offers a rare experience of belonging — a moment when people come together not only for films but to share ideas, emotions, and attention to the world around us. The Inspiration Forum is open to anyone who wants to think deeply, without cynicism and without the pressure to offer ready-made solutions," said **Tereza Swadoschová**, Head of the Inspiration Forum.

Ji.hlava More Accessible

With last year's extended festival length, Ji.hlava focused even more on reaching the local public. To ensure accessibility for all, the festival offered free accreditations to seniors aged 65+ and to holders of disability cards (ZTP and ZTP/P). For parents and children, Ji.hlava prepared three screenings adapted to their needs.

A new addition was a screening intended primarily for seniors, with free admission. Ji.hlava also organized a special screening for Deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences.

Thanks to cooperation with local institutions — the Jihlava Psychiatric Hospital, the Jihlava Day and Weekly Care Centre, the Pelhřimov Senior Home, the Pelhřimov Day Centre, and the Stříbrné terasy Senior Home — special screenings were arranged for people who otherwise cannot access documentary cinema.

Ji.hlava for Kids and Ji.hlava Vibes

Ji.hlava for Kids accredited 500 children under 15 and was visited by more than 3,600 participants. The ten-day program at the Silver House included: 56 educational activities, 5 cultural performances (theatre, concerts, dance), 20 film screenings, 7 Q&A sessions with directors, 15 literary readings, a treasure hunt across festival venues, and other accompanying activities. A supervised **children's playroom** was available for the youngest visitors, along with **inspirational lectures for parents**. Through creative learning and experiential methods, children explored **different forms of boundaries** — from personal to geographical. *"Special emphasis was placed on film-education programs that help new generations understand film, develop critical and creative thinking, and navigate today's overwhelming audiovisual landscape,"* said programmer Václav Tintěra.

Ji.hlava Vibes, held for the fourth time, is designed for teenagers and created in collaboration with students from the Jihlava–Helenín Secondary School of Arts and Crafts. Over ten days, the program was attended by more than 1,200 participants and featured 5 workshops, 6 debates and lectures, 2 screenings of films made by directors under 19, a fashion show of student works, 9 cultural performances (concerts, improvisations, slam poetry, readings, DJs). *"This year's Vibes had an amazing vibe! Because it was made by young people for young people, and because it managed to*

bring Ji.hlava closer to Jihlava's young cultural scene. We've received positive feedback from both performers and audiences, and I'm excited that high-school students will again be involved next year," said Sára Procházková, high-school student and member of the Ji.hlava Vibes organizing team.

Festival Trailer: A Tribute to the People of Ukraine

The author of the trailer for the 29th Ji.hlava IDFF is renowned Ukrainian director Sergei Loznitsa. The trailer pays tribute to war-torn Ukraine and takes place in the metro of the city of Dnipro. *"The footage comes from material filmed in spring 2023 as part of the project The Invasion. I wanted to capture the lives of ordinary Ukrainians across the country — from Kharkiv to Lviv, from Kyiv to Odessa — and observe how the war affects every aspect of civilian life and transforms both individuals and society as a whole,"* said Loznitsa.

Record Participation in the Industry Program

The festival's Industry Program is traditionally dedicated to supporting documentary filmmaking at all stages. This year, it reached more than 1,530 film professionals from around the world.

Industry Days took place from 28–31 October 2025. For the fifth time, the international forum Ji.hlava New Visions was held, presenting 15 documentary projects from Europe and 8 from the USA — 12 of which received awards. Another 32 projects took part in the Ji.hlava New Visions Market.

The festival hosted a meeting of nearly 40 representatives of international film festivals. The Festival Identity program aims to strengthen cooperation among film festivals and support the exchange of know-how — this year on the theme "How to Make Festivals More Inclusive".

This year's Industry activities also focused on Croatia, the Industry Country in Focus, presenting co-production opportunities, local filmmakers, and the most promising Croatian documentary projects currently in development. An official delegation of filmmakers from Austria also attended.

The Matchmaking Accelerator, designed to connect filmmakers and producers with festival organizers, distributors, and co-producers, was again highly successful. Ji.hlava facilitated nearly 788 professional meetings.

The Visegrad Accelerator brought together professionals from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland.

At Ji.hlava, 18 emerging European producers were presented for the fourteenth time within the Emerging Producers 2026 program.

Through the co-production initiative Ji.hlava / JB Films, the festival supported three emerging films this year. The aim is to strengthen auteur documentary filmmaking in Central and Eastern Europe.

The three winning projects received a total of EUR 54,000, and all income generated from Ji.hlava / JB Films' co-production shares is reinvested into future documentary projects in the region.

Conference on Ethics in Documentary Film

The Conference on Ethics in Documentary Film was held for the fourth time. Its theme was "Creative Control and Authorship in the Age of AI."

The day-long program offered discussions on how artificial intelligence reshapes the concepts of authorship, control, and responsibility in filmmaking. The academic panel provided theoretical perspectives on authorship, creative control, and AI collaboration in documentary cinema. The keynote lecture was delivered by director and academic Dominic Lees, focusing on the transformation of dramaturgy in the presence of AI.

The Conference on Ethics serves as a platform connecting people interested in documentary filmmaking and ethics — from academia, the industry, and the general public. Its purpose is to spark dialogue on essential ethical questions and stimulate domestic research by creating a new space for discussion between scholars and professionals. The conference was attended by 203 participants.

The 30th Ji.hlava IDFF will take place on October 23 – November 1, 2026. More information at www.ji-hlava.com and on the festival's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) profiles.

29th Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival

24. 10.—2. 11. 2025

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