

## The International Festival of Films on Art (FIFA) will close its 39th edition with the film *THE CONDUCTOR* by Maria Peters

With this closing film, FIFA will have presented 250 films  
in its 39th edition.



Photo extraite du film *La chef d'orchestre*.

Montréal, March 24, 2021 — The International Festival of Film on Art (FIFA) is pleased to announce a 250th film to close its 39th edition, on **Sunday, March 28**. It is *The Conductor* (*La Chef d'orchestre* in French), by Dutch producer, screenwriter, and director **Maria Peters**, presented as a **Canadian premiere**.

This film is inspired by the real story of Dutch woman Antonia Brico (played by Christanne de Bruijn), 24 years old when the film is set, in 1926. Having immigrated to the United States with her parents (played by Annet Malherbe and Raymond Thiry) when she was a child, she dreams of becoming an orchestra conductor. But no one takes her ambition seriously, and her piano teacher advises her against entering the competition for admission to the conservatory. Far from being discouraged, she returns to the Netherlands, where she pleads with the celebrated conductor Willem Mengelberg (played by Gijs Scholten van Aschat) to teach her about conducting. Mengelberg is not comfortable with this idea and sends her to Berlin, where, surprisingly, she has more of a chance to succeed as a woman. Emotional stress threatens to overwhelm her when the love of her life puts her in a difficult position.

“With the presentation of this Canadian premiere, the International Festival of Films on Art is pleased to take a step into fiction and partner with the distributor to show this feature film, which is a perfect closing for the 39th edition of the Festival,” noted Jacinthe Brisebois, director of programming for films on art for FIFA. “In featuring Antonia Brico, a pathfinder for women in orchestra conducting, filmmaker María Peters reminds us of the importance of equity in all fields of art. Following in her footsteps, our program makes sure to highlight women creators, performers, and muses, who inspire people in society to emulate them.”

“We are pleased to partner with FIFA to present a film that for the enjoyment of lovers of music and biographical films,” stated Ariane Giroux Dallaire, vice-president of MK2 | MILE END. “This collaboration, which began last year, has finally borne fruit thanks to the flexibility and openness of the Festival.”

#### CANADIAN PREMIERE

#### The film *The Conductor*

Screened online on [lefifa.com](http://lefifa.com), **Sunday, March 28, at 7:00 pm**.

Presented in English, with French subtitles.

Length: 2 h 19 min.

#### Awards

- Denver International Film Festival, USA (2019) – Audience award for feature-length fiction film
- SCENECS International Debut Film Festival, Netherlands (2018) – Award for best actor for star Christanne de Bruijn.

## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



After studying law, **Maria Peters** graduated from the Dutch Film Academy with the short film *Alle Vogels Vliegen (All the Birds Fly)*, which was broadcast on Dutch national television. After graduation, she was an assistant director on several films, including Alex van Warmerdam's *Abel*. In 1987, she co-founded her own production company with Dave Schram and Hans Pos: Shooting Star Filmcompany BV. From its office at Prinsengracht in Amsterdam, she has co-produced forty films. She has written fourteen screenplays, three of which have been produced and released. She has directed a number of films, three of which are still among the top 20 Dutch films of the last twenty years, making her one of the most successful Dutch screenwriters and directors. Her first international film, *Sonny Boy*, was the Dutch submission for the Oscars. *The Conductor* is her most recent feature film. In 2019, she began to work on her third Pietje Bell (Peter Bell) film, *Peter Bell Goes Flying*, and she continues to write new screenplays.

## ABOUT FIFA

Founded by René Rozon, the International Festival of Films on Art (FIFA) is dedicated to the international promotion and distribution of films on art and media arts. For nearly four decades, it has presented an annual event in March, which allows discovery of the latest documentaries on art. With its various year-round activities and programming, distributed through a vast cultural and educational network, FIFA is committed to increasing the knowledge and appreciation of art among the public, promoting the work of artists in the fields of cinema, music video, and visual arts, and encouraging the production and dissemination of art films.

## ABOUT MK2 | MILE END

MK2 | MILE END is an independent Canadian distribution company based in Montreal. Founded in 2017 by industry veteran Charles Tremblay, MK2 | MILE END has delivered audiences the best of Canadian and international cinema including the Academy Award winner for Best Picture, Bong Joon-Ho's *Parasite*. Other recent releases include the critically acclaimed *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, Academy Award-nominated documentary *Honeyland* and the Quebecois produced *And the Birds Rained Down*.

FIFA thanks the Gouvernement du Québec, the Government of Canada, Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm Canada, SODEC, the Secrétariat à la région métropolitaine, the City of Montréal, and the Conseil des arts de Montréal for their generous support.

39th International Festival of Films on Art  
Unique passport and programming available across Canada  
online at [lefifa.com](http://lefifa.com)  
Available online and on AppleTV

The 39th FIFA Passport gives access to the entire program of the 39th edition of FIFA, until March 28, 2021, at 11:59 pm. The closing film will only be available from 7pm on Sunday, March 28, 2021.

*THE CONDUCTOR* will be released in theaters on April 2nd.

-30-

Source :  
Isabelle Huiban  
Director of Communications, Marketing, and  
Partnerships  
Festival International du Film sur l'Art (Le FIFA)  
[lefifa.com](http://lefifa.com)

Press Relations:  
**Laurence Rajotte-Soucy**  
**RuGicomm**  
**Tel.: 514-512-1235**  
[laurence@rugicomm.ca](mailto:laurence@rugicomm.ca)

For the film *THE CONDUCTOR*

## DISTRIBUTION

Mk2 Mile End  
Ariane Giroux Dallaire  
Tel : 514-271-1222  
[agd@mk2mile-end.com](mailto:agd@mk2mile-end.com)

## PRESS

MINGOTWO  
Mélanie Mingotaud  
Tel : 514 582 5272  
[Melanie@mingo2.ca](mailto:Melanie@mingo2.ca)

Viewing link available upon request to Melanie Mingotaud, MINGOTWO.

Trailer for *THE CONDUCTOR*: [MK2MILEENDSHAREPOINT](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MK2MILEENDSHAREPOINT)