



PRESS RELEASE
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**The Movies that Matter Festival announces new theme
Take on Afghanistan and main guests:
Sahra Mani, Aboozar Amini and Dawood Hilmandi.**

**This edition will take place from 8 to 16 April in The Hague,
throughout the country and online.**



Feel the world change at the Movies that Matter Festival 2022. Forward, backward and in directions we barely comprehend. Watch over eighty beautiful, exciting, and gripping documentaries and feature films from around the world. Experience inspiring debates, Q&As and educational programmes. Meet directors, activists, thinkers, and experts. New this year is the **Take on Afghanistan** theme: recent and urgent films from and about Afghanistan that now deserve even more attention than usual.

"We want to give filmmakers who have to work under particularly difficult circumstances the attention and support they need. Especially now it is important that independent stories from a country where censorship rules also reach the rest of the world"

Margje de Koning - artistic director

Main guests

The first main guest is Sahra Mani, who fled Kabul in 2021, and is the director of the documentary *A Thousand Girls Like Me* (2019), which won more than 25 awards worldwide. Aboozar Amini (*Kabul, City in the Wind*, 2018) is also present at the festival this year. As one of the few filmmakers to return to Afghanistan after graduating, he and other young talents have been part of a new wave of Afghan cinema. The Dutch Afghan Dawood Hilmandi started his film career with *Bekhawy* (2009) which was screened at International Film Festival Rotterdam. In addition, his shorts *Arvaksca* and *2087* were screened at Cannes in 2011 and 2012.

The main guests will be put in the spotlight at the festival with a retrospective of their work. They also present new work in masterclasses and participate in panel discussions with, among others, Afghan makers.



Sahra Mani



Dawood Hilmandi



Aboozar Amini

Themes

The films in **Take on Future** show the dilemmas of the transition to a sustainable future. What does it take to speed this up? **Take on Love** is a colourful, diverse, and sparkling themed programme about the right to be yourself and to love whoever you want. In **Take on Power** we present films about unequal power relations. And about people who take on forces and structures that seem bigger than themselves. The new **Take on Voices** theme gives voice to journalists, festival organizers, filmmakers, activists, and artists whose freedom of expression is restricted. Recent and urgent films from and about Afghanistan receive attention in **Take on Afghanistan**. What profound impact are the latest developments having on filmmakers and human rights in the country?

Competitions

In **Activist** you watch documentaries about the work and life of human rights defenders. **Camera Justitia** zooms in on the importance of the rule of law and the fight against impunity. The third competition programme is **Dutch Movies Matter**, with Dutch feature films and documentaries that open eyes to human rights. The Movies that Matter Festival presents a total of seven awards within the various competitions.

Furthermore, international juries choose one winner for the **Grand Jury Documentary** and **Grand Jury Fiction**, where cinematography and content go hand in hand. Three films selected by a student jury from Leiden University are eligible for the **Students' Choice Award**.

The Movies that Matter Festival 2022 is made possible by main partner Nationale Postcodeloterij and (partly subject to change) partners such as Amnesty International, ASN Foundation, Creative Europe Media, Municipality of The Hague, Fonds 1818, Fonds 21, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands Film Fund, Oak Foundation, Simmons+Simmons, vfonds, VEVAM and VSBfonds.

The most important media partners are Dagblad Trouw and BNNVARA.

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