

## **11mm Festival Jury Award goes to Somalia documentary**

**Frank Steffan wins the 11mm Audience Award with his “Das Double 1977/78”, a journey back in time with the 1. FC Köln**

**The Swiss production “En la boca” receives the 11mm Shortkicks Award**

PRESS RELEASE

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The documentary “Men in the Arena” by US director J. R. Biersmith has been awarded the 11mm jury prize. The four-member expert jury, composed of Hertha BSC Sport Director Michael Preetz, Alba Berlin Vice-president and film scholar Henning Harnisch, Italian Football correspondent Birgit Schönau and Barcelona’s Offside Festival director Oriol Rodríguez - elected to give the award to the American film. The film traces Somalia’s struggle toward rebirth as a footballing nation.

“A most interesting film about a forgotten land and the essence of the game. A documentary masterpiece”, said jury member Birgit Schönau. Michael Preetz praised the “detailed documentary with superb visual language about a strong issue - especially because of its political aspect. A demanding and challenging project”.

The audience’s favorite, however, was the German production “Das Double 1977/78”, a journey back in time to the best season in 1. FC Köln’s history. The second documentary about the club by Frank Steffan thrilled viewers packed into Berlin’s Babylon Cinema – among them former Köln winger and Bundesliga winner Karl-Heinz Thielen. At the closing ceremony, VfL Wolfsburg midfielder Maximilian Arnold handed the filmmaker the Golden 11 – the 11mm Football Film Festival Audience Award.

The awards ceremony was emceed by NDR journalist and anchor Inka Blumensaat. Seven short films from six different countries were screened at the 11mm shortkicks Gala. The prize for the best football short film of the year went to “En la boca”, about the Molina family who live in Buenos Aires in the shadow of the legendary Boca Juniors stadium. Making up the jury were current players Mitchell Weiser (Hertha BSC) and Babett Peter (VfL Wolfsburg), Bernd Buder from the Cottbus Film Festival, journalist Alina Schwermer, actors Selda Kaya and Sönke Möhring, and former Germany international Bernard Dietz.

The main topic of this year’s festival was “Football and Power”. In collaboration with Kooperative Berlin, and thanks to the support of the Bundesstiftung Aufarbeitung, an eight-episode podcast series was produced throughout the festival’s five days. The podcast will be available online in the coming months.

“We are particularly happy this year with the great reception for the political films. That shows that football culture also cares about politics in sport”, said Birger Schmidt, festival director.

In its 15th edition, the 11mm Football Film Festival, together with the British Council, again screened a series of films about British football. The partnership is a decade and a half long, starting with the first edition of the festival in 2004, which featured solely British productions.

With just weeks to go before the FIFA World Cup in Russia, the festival included a retrospective entitled "Football in Russian Films". Seven films from the Soviet Union and Russia were shown in cooperation with the Russian House for Science and Art and the Agency Mediaost. And this feature goes into extra time: On Tuesday and Wednesday there are still four films to watch in the Friedrichstraße cinema.

Birger Schmidt, festival director: "We thank our sponsors and partners, especially the DFB Cultural Foundation and Volkswagen. We're already looking forward to the 16th edition in May 2019."

### **About 11mm**

The world's first Football Film Festival was founded in 2004 in Berlin by Brot & Spiele e.V. It takes place every year during five days in mid-March. It has developed long-term partnerships with festivals such as CINEfoot in Rio de Janeiro, Offside in Barcelona or Flutlicht in Basel. In addition to success on home turf in Berlin, organizers have also arranged a few away matches: World Cup and European Championship tours at each of the last three tournaments, as well as a full program in Mannheim in 2017, which is set to continue in 2018. Since 2016, the German Football Museum in Dortmund has been a partner of 11mm. This year's festival was also presented by the DFB Cultural Foundation.

Infos: [www.11-mm.de](http://www.11-mm.de) [facebook.com/11millimeter](https://facebook.com/11millimeter) [twitter.com/11mm](https://twitter.com/11mm)

For more information please contact:

Mirjam Wiekenkamp

030-41723030 / 0176-28771839

[office@noisefilmpr.com](mailto:office@noisefilmpr.com)