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## PRESS RELEASE

### **First Cut Lab expands activities into Belgium and Switzerland.**

Trying times for the film industry continue, but the First Cut Lab team is determined to keep supporting filmmakers & their films. Headed by **Matthieu Darras**, the workshop for feature films in editing phase unveils **partnerships in Belgium and Switzerland**, offering tailor-made Labs that adapt both to the **specific needs of each film** and the **current working environment**.

#### **First Cut Lab Belgium**

The first edition of **First Cut Lab Belgium** will enable at least two Belgian films, previously supported either by the **Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF)** or by the **Centre du cinéma of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles**, to benefit from consultancy program. Projects interested will have to apply by December, 15<sup>th</sup>, and will be able to participate in the Lab anytime during the first semester 2021.

**An Feyfer**, in charge of Talent Development at VAF, comments: « *Filmmakers often have the habit of participating in workshops during the development of their script. This is not the case during the editing phase. Although this is a phase where they rewrite their story, they would rather not reveal too much to the outside world. But it is precisely then that external feedback can increase the potential of the film, and that is why the VAF wants to give them this opportunity to work with First Cut Lab in the safe and confidential environment they create.* »

First Cut Lab Belgium is supported by Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF) and Centre du Cinéma of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles.

#### **First Cut Lab Switzerland**

The first edition of **First Cut Lab Switzerland** will take place at the **Solothurn Film Festival**, within its new program section dedicated to the filmmaking process called "A l'atelier", organized with the support of the Migros Culture Percentage's Story Lab. At least two Swiss films will be workshopped during the period of the festival, whose 56<sup>th</sup> edition will take place on the following dates: 20.-27. January 2021. Deadline for applications is also set for December, 15<sup>th</sup> 2020.

First Cut Lab Switzerland will involve multi-awarded editors Agnieszka Glinska from Poland (*Sweat* – Cannes 2020; *I Never Cry* – San Sebastian 2020) and Catalin Cristutiu from Romania (*Uppercase Print* – Berlinale 2020; *Ivana The Terrible* – Locarno 2019) as editor consultants. Gaia Furrer, artistic director of Venice sidebar 'Giornate degli Autori', will be amongst the industry advisors.

**Anita Hugi**, director of the Solothurn Film Festival: "I am very happy to be able to bring First Cut Lab to Switzerland for the first time. This Lab will be one of the flagship events of our brand new "A l'atelier" section, dedicated to artistic exchange and creation. It is a great pleasure to launch this novelty in partnership with the First Cut Lab team. "

**Mathieu Darras**, founder & director of First Cut Lab, says about these collaborations: *"When First Cut Lab was founded in 2015, we initially focused our attention to the cinemas of Central and Eastern Europe, notably thanks to our long-standing partnerships with the When East Meets West Coproduction Forum and the Polish Film Institute. While remaining loyal to these cinemas – the new program First Cut+ we launched in 2020 is specifically designed with them in mind, we are very excited to bring First Cut Lab in Western Europe.*

*Besides the new partnerships in Belgium and Switzerland announced today, we have currently an open call for the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of First Cut Lab Trieste, for which we are looking for Italian films to workshop. Last but not least, we are finalizing co-operations that will see more films from Western Europe taking part in First Cut Lab in 2021."*

### **First Cut Lab films in festivals, cinemas & online**

The most recent First Cut Lab films that premiered in a festival were **Ivan Ikić's Oasis** (Serbia) and **Ana Rocha de Sousa's Listen** (Portugal), both awarded at the Venice Film Festival. *Listen* won notably the prestigious **Lion of the Future for Best Debut Film** across all sections of the festival, and **the Orizzonti Special Jury Prize**. *Oasis* received **the Europa Cinemas Label** of Giornate degli Autori.

**Maxim Dashkin's Far Frontiers** (Russia) competed at the Moscow Film Festival in October, where it was the second-best rated film by the festival audience.

**Teemu Nikki's Nimby** (Finland) got released in Finnish cinemas on October, 9<sup>th</sup>, and **Grzegorz Zariczny's Simple Things** (Poland) will soon be distributed in Polish cinemas by the New Horizons Association.

The animated feature by **Avid Liongoren, Hayop Ka!** (Philippines), is available on Netflix Asia from October, 29<sup>th</sup>.