

## Berlin Sci-Fi Filmfest 2020: Beamed directly into your home

BY DAVID MOURIQUAND NOVEMBER 26, 2020

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Randy Scott Slavin's *PROJECT-19* (Session 6), about six-year old engineering genius Zoe who holes herself up in the basement to better solve her biggest issue with Covid-19. Photo: PROJECT-19

This year's fourth edition of Berlin Sci-Fi Filmfest can't take place in Babylon Kino as planned, but it has found a way to continue [online via XERB.TV](#).

From November 27 to December 6, the festival offers streamers an impressive selection of independent short films from over 28 countries, as well as seven feature films. The screenings are segmented in 20 sessions, beginning with The DACH Session, a series of short films from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The selection features the European premiere of *CYCLE 2217*, a German post-apocalyptic short by Evgeny Kalachikhin and Ruben Dauenhauer, who depict our 23rd-century world as one where depleted resources are as scarce as empathy, as well as Martin Reinhart and Virgil Widrich's multi-award winning short *tx-reverse 360°*. Shot at a resolution of 10K with an OmniCam-360° camera at Berlin's very own Babylon Kino, it poses the question: What happens in a cinema when you reverse the spatial and temporal axes? It's an unsettling and uniquely fascinating experimental piece that stands out in this first batch of shorts.

The brilliantly diverse short film sessions are composed of seven to 10 films that collectively run around the 90-minute mark. They boast an eclectic mix of surreal avant-garde headtrips, music videos, climate dramas, time travel comedies, on top of all the animation, horror, action and comedy your futurist heart could hope for. There are also a few eerily topical pandemic drama shorts, including the German premiere of the New Zealand short *Zealandia* (in Session 2), in which an oppressive state becomes the only virus-free country left on Earth, and the UK entry *Living Things* (Session 3), following the efforts of a traumatised and isolated man seeking to find a better life in a post-pandemic world.

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EXBERLINER

Our favourite is Randy Scott Slavin's *PROJECT-19* (Session 6), about six-year old engineering genius Zoe who holes herself up in the basement to better solve her biggest issue with Covid-19. Shot during quarantine with his family, it's a tense, unpredictable and thoroughly heartwarming short that not only boasts the power of creativity when faced with limitation in challenging times but represents the high quality of what you can expect from Berlin Sci-Fi Filmfest's programmes.



On the feature front, there's the German premiere of the horror-comedy *Hawk and Rev: Vampire Slayers*, which sees the vampire-bludgeoning dreams of Philip "Hawk" Hawkins come true when the blood-sucking lamia finally decide to show up. It's a delightfully daft B-movie that aims to do for vampires what *Kung Fury* did for time-travelling martial artists. We're also looking forward to David Liban's post-apocalyptic drama *A Feral World*, as well as Justin Timpone's *A Christmas Cancellation*, a *The Truman Show*-esque comedy about popular sitcom characters who not only discover that they are fictional but also have to fight for their existence when faced with their show's season finale.

Take your picks and don't miss out. Visit Berlin Sci-Fi Filmfest's website for more information, and full festival passes [are available here](#).

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