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## 16TH BERLIN & BEYOND FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES LINE-UP

**America's premier festival of new cinema from Germany, Austria and Switzerland comes to the legendary Castro on October 20**

*Thursday, September 29, 2011*

(San Francisco) The Berlin & Beyond Film Festival (Oct 20–26) celebrates its 16th year with an exceptional lineup of the year's best films from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and an array of panels, parties and industry guests sure to delight both the cineast and the casual fan of German-language film. Presenting over 20 films and a forward-thinking program of short films and on-stage discussions, this year's Berlin & Beyond Film Festival celebrates the theme "**Light, Love & Revolution**" with a number of international programs building on a core of films illuminating Germany's volatile post-war era. Other programming strands explored in this year's festival are **Migration & Multiculturalism** and **Das Leben Der Kinder (The Lives of Children)**. Berlin & Beyond opens October 20<sup>th</sup> and runs through October 26<sup>th</sup> in San Francisco at the Castro Theatre with an additional encore day in San Jose on the 29<sup>th</sup>, screening 29 films overall, including three international premieres, and two North American premieres.

On October 20th, the festival's **Opening Night** celebrates the 50th anniversary of Turkish immigration, launching with the charming magical-realist family comedy **Almanya – Welcome to Germany** by Nesrin and Yasemin Samdereli, winner of both Best Screenplay and Outstanding Feature Film at this year's German Film Awards. After six-year-old Cenk is bullied in the schoolyard when he is unable to identify himself as either German or Turkish, his cousin begins to tell him the story of his grandfather Hüseyin and his immigration to Germany as part of the country's "guest worker" program. Later, at a family dinner, his grandfather announces that he has purchased a house in Turkey and the family begrudgingly embarks on a pilgrimage that promises to bring their past and future into balance. Following the screening, the Opening Night party kicks off at 9:30 pm on the beloved Castro Mezzanine, where film fans can celebrate and mingle with luminaries while enjoying delicious cocktails and delectable culinary treats. To accompany the film, the festival will host a panel discussion, entitled "In Transit: A Panel on Migration and Multiculturalism" as a forum for the discussion of the film and the current multinational climate in Europe. Nina Kusturica's **Little Alien**, boxing doc **Klitschko** and the time-spanning love story **Remembrance** also explore festival programming strand "Migration and Multiculturalism".

Festival **Closing Night** film **If Not Us, Who**, is the winner of the 2011 German Film Awards Best Film (in Bronze) and the Alfred Bauer Prize following its World Premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival. Using the restless love affair of two students-turned-revolutionaries as a foil for the changing times, Andres Veiel's debut feature deftly weaves a narrative through Germany's explosive 1960's, connecting the dots between the disparate revolutionary ideologies of figures like Stokely Carmichael and Andreas Baader, and exploring the expanding link between popular culture and political sea-change. After the screening, the Closing Night party takes place at 9:30 pm on the Castro Mezzanine, celebrating the conclusion of another year of innovative programming with an assortment of local tastes and themed drinks. German documentaries **Joschka & Mr. Fischer** and **Face the Wall**, and Austrian narrative **The Fatherless** continue the Light, Love and Revolution programming strand.

The Festival's Centerpiece screening, **Bold Heroes**, winner of the Zurich Film Festival Audience Award and the Swiss Film Prize for Best Actor, is sure to be a mid-festival highlight. In equal parts inspirational and amusing for its light-hearted slant on the story of four mischievous boys determined to live up their teenage years despite the various conditions that keep them hospital-bound, **Bold Heroes** also leads the festival's third programming strand "Das Leben der Kinder" (The Lives of Children), encompassing Chris Kraus's **The Poll Diaries**, Johannes Schmid's **Winter's Daughter**, and animated matinee feature **The Tigerduck Gang**.

## German Films Panorama

As ever, the festival's largest program, German Films Panorama, plays host to a kaleidoscopic assortment of the latest award-garnering German cinema. Andreas Dresen's new film **Stopped on Track**, Un Certain Regard winner at this year's Cannes Film Festival, and FIPRESCI prize winning German/Argentinian co-production **The Day I Was Not Born** hold fresh insights toward the nature of love and trust. Tom Tykwer's hit film **3 (Drei)**, and international festival favorite **Young Goethe in Love**, both screening at the festival's encore day in San Jose, promise to tickle audiences with radically re-imagined notions of comedy and romance. Alain Gsponer's **Lila, Lila** and Anna Justice's **Remembrance** inspect relationships in two fleeting states, farce and memory. The lush cinematography of **The Poll Diaries** and airy atmospheres of **Winter's Daughter** disarmingly present the spectrum of childhood experience from the most whimsical to the most dire.

## German Documentaries

The festival's German Documentaries selections this year highlight international and regional celebrities and causes, beginning with the international premiere of **Joschka and Mr. Fischer**, an exploration of post-war Germany through the eyes of the polarizing former foreign minister directed by one of Germany's leading filmmakers. **Klitschko**, a film about international boxing superstars the Klitschko brothers and **100 Years Hollywood**, a star-studded exploration of the life of Carl Laemmle, godfather of Universal Pictures, celebrate celebrity of a different kind. **Jane's Journey**, a travelogue of famed wildlife conservationist Jane Goodall, and the emotional personal histories of East German prisoners in **Face The Wall** round out this year's non-fiction offerings.

## Austrian Cinema

The Austrian Cinema program shines this year in the Berlinale Panorama selection **The Fatherless**, a complex work about family secrets buried in the history of a failed commune; Nina Kusturica's **Little Alien**, which mixes verité and narrative elements to document the dangerous lives of young refugees; and the thrilling mountaineering documentary **Mount St. Elias**.

## Swiss Window / Inaugural Late Show

This year's Swiss Window programming includes all three of the Swiss-German films nominated for best picture at the Swiss Film Awards. The lineup begins with centerpiece film **Bold Heroes; How About Love**, a new film from Utopia Blues director Stefan Haupt that explores the emotional impact of refugee problems on first-world bourgeois; **The Sandman**, a fairy-tale about a man who buries his own dreams so deeply that he starts to become the mythical character of the title.

For the first time, the festival is pleased to present a **Late Show** feature for genre fans and more adventurous film-goers: blockbuster director Michael Steiner's first horror entry, Swiss Film Prize winner **Sennentuntschi**. In a remote village in the Swiss Alps, a beautiful, mute woman suddenly appears from nowhere under suspicious circumstances. Only the local policeman, Reusch, is bold enough to attempt to understand where she came from, and how her strange affliction could endanger the people of the village.

## Festival Guests

Berlin & Beyond prides itself as not only a showcase for the current crop of German, Austrian and Swiss cinema, but also a forum for discussion about the films and the issues that surround them. A roster of some of the boldest names in contemporary German language cinema has been confirmed to appear in conversation at the festival: from Germany, documentary filmmaker **Pepe Danquart (Joschka and Mr. Fischer)**, actors **Milan Peschel (Stopped on Track)**, **Scherwin Amini and Nicolas Hugentobler (Bold Heroes)** screenwriter **Nesrin Samdereli and director Yasemin Samdereli (Almanya – Welcome To Germany)**, and director **Andres Veiel (If Not Us, Who)**. From Switzerland, directors **Michael Steiner (Sennentuntschi)** and **Peter Luisi (The Sandman)** are scheduled to appear, and from Austria, directors **Nina Kusturica and Nora Friedel (Little Alien)**. Further guest appearances will be announced as they are confirmed.

## New Festival Identity

The festival is proud to unveil its dynamic new identity this year, developed by one of Germany's foremost brand design agencies, Metadesign, in cooperation with festival director Sophoan Sorn and president Sabine Erlienwein. The concept of the new logo design, build around two B-shaped glyphs, is to highlight the curating and gathering of films and represents the powerful point of illumination that brings cinematic stories into focus. With offices in Berlin, San Francisco and around the world, Metadesign and has created identity programs for client roster for clients such as Sony, Coca-Cola, eBay and Adobe.

## **16TH BERLIN & BEYOND FILM FESTIVAL**

The 16th Berlin & Beyond Film Festival runs from October 20th–26th at San Francisco's largest single-screen, the historic The Castro Theatre, with an additional encore day at San Jose's Camera 12 Cinemas on October 29th. A presentation of the Goethe-Institut San Francisco, Berlin & Beyond has been America's premier festival of new cinema from Germany, Austria and Switzerland since 1996. The festival serves as a gateway for the American public to experience the diversity, history and progression of the German-speaking countries in Europe, while celebrating the universal spirit and vision of filmmakers from this global region. In the last 15 years, the festival has presented over 500 films to more than 110,000 people, and welcomed hundreds of emerging and established guests from the film industry.

For festival information, go to [www.berlinbeyond.com](http://www.berlinbeyond.com) or call [415-572-2075](tel:415-572-2075).

For photos and press materials, email the festival publicist at [jackson.scarlett@gmail.com](mailto:jackson.scarlett@gmail.com).

## **GOETHE-INSTITUT**

The Goethe-Institut is Germany's official cultural center in over 80 countries worldwide. The Institut exists to promote art and films from Germany, the study of the German language, and encourage the international cultural exchange with Germany.

## **LEAD SPONSORS**

Berlin & Beyond salutes the sponsors of its 16th annual edition! Presenting Sponsors are Lufthansa, Kuehne + Nagel and MetaDesign. Premiere Sponsors are the Consulate General of Germany in San Francisco, the Consulate General of Switzerland in San Francisco and San Francisco Grants for the Arts. Principal Venue Partner is The Castro Theatre. Major Sponsors are Solid, Consulate General of Switzerland in Los Angeles and Camera Cinemas. Cooperation Partner is the Goethe-Institut Los Angeles. Lead Hotel Partner is the Beresford Hotel. Lead Event Sponsors are Folio Fine Wine Partners, Bionade, Blue Angel Vodka and Pure Swiss Water.

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