



PRESS RELEASE

Film|Neu: New Films from Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Eleven Film Programs Mark 25 Years of New German-Language Cinema in DC

November 2-5, 2017

**Landmark's E Street Cinema
555 11th St. NW
Washington, DC 20004**

www.filmneu.org

Download Dropbox images [here](#).

(Washington, DC, October 25, 2017) – The 25th annual edition of Film|Neu, running November 2-5, 2017 at Landmark's E Street Cinema, is a week-long showcase of new German-language cinema and the artists behind it.

What started out as a small festival 25 years ago is still healthy and strong, evidence that audiences are hungry for a rich variety of themes and genres that transform with new worlds and perspectives. This year's opening film, *The Young Karl Marx*, brings history to life with a retelling of Marx's early years. More recent history – the fall of the Wall – plays a role in *In Times of Fading Light*, starring Bruno Ganz. *The Divine Order*, Switzerland's nomination for the Academy Awards, wraps up the festival. In between are documentaries and dramas, comedies and dark stories, short films and a European "Western." Combined with special guests and events, these make for a strong festival of international cinema that isn't to be missed.

Note: All films have English subtitles.

Film|Neu is a project of Goethe-Institut Washington, the Austrian Cultural Forum, and the Embassy of Switzerland, with support from German films.

OPENING

Thursday, November 2, 7 pm

The Young Karl Marx (Der junge Karl Marx)



In 1844, 26-year-old Karl Marx and his wife Jenny are living in exile in Paris. Indebted and troubled by an existential crisis, he meets the slightly younger Friedrich Engels, son of a factory owner. Although Marx at first dismisses him as a member of the privileged upper class, the two impetuous young men soon become friends. Engels, who had previously published a study about the extreme impoverishment of the British

proletariat, and Marx inspire each other to write texts that lay the theoretical foundation for a revolution which, in their eyes, is inevitable. It's not merely about interpreting the world anymore. It's about changing it. Fundamentally.

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Born in Haiti, **Raoul Peck** (b. 1953) grew up in Zaire and the USA. He studied in France, the USA and at the German and Television Academy in Berlin. This equally multilateral drama depicts the rise of the Marxist theory and the formation of *The Communist Manifesto*, one of the most influential texts of our time.

Discussion and reception with special guest follows the screening.

Friday, November 3, 6:30 pm

LOMO - The Language of Many Others



Simply put, Karl is the black sheep in his family. About to finish high school, he is already disillusioned and couldn't differ more from his ambitious sister and his liberal, formerly successful parents. He spends most of his free time on the internet with his blog "LOMO - The Language of Many Others," where he collects photographs and videos, compiling them into series. When he falls in love with Doro, things seem to finally make

sense to him. Doro initially responds to her opinionated and rebellious classmate - but not for long. Karl is convinced: Everything is random! And he starts playing a dangerous game. Uploading a sensitive video of Doro and himself online, Karl lets his followers decide on his actions and eventually, on matters of life and death.

In this dramatic and dynamic feature film debut, **Julia Langhof** (b. 1981, Berlin) explores coming of age through the eyes of an online generation.

Discussion follows the screening with director Julia Langhof.

Friday, November 3, 9:15 pm

Beuys



Another world, mostly in rough black and white esthetics, far away from pictures in high resolution, captivates the viewer with the vividness of its protagonist: Joseph Beuys enters the stage of this documentary. With hat, of course. And even though the pictures tell stories of another time, Beuys proves to be one of the most remarkable and visionary German artists and still seems - today, 31 years after his death - as ahead of our time

as he was before. "Money shouldn't be a commodity," he tried to explain, knowing that money trade would undermine democracy.

The film hardly needs any modern footage or comments. Compiled of countless photographs and television excerpts, we witness Beuys' peculiar approach to challenging and provoking the mindset of society. With his *Fettecke* (lit. Fat Corner) abstract art installation, some felt, occasional Fluxus performances and general challenging of conventions, Beuys takes his place as the first real late-sixties media-artist alongside Andy Warhol.

For *Beuys*, **Andreas Veil** (b. 1959, Stuttgart), montaged a range of previously untapped visual and audio sources to create an intimate look at a human being and his art. Previous works include the highly-acclaimed *If Not Us, Who?* (*Wer wenn nicht wir*, 2011) and *Black Box Germany* (2001).

Introduced by James Meyer, Curator, National Gallery of Art.

Saturday, November 4, 2 pm

New Short Films from Germany, Austria and Switzerland



Bon Voyage

Switzerland, 2016, Drama, 20 min.,
Director / Screenplay: Marc Reymond
Wilkins

During a cruise in the Mediterranean Sea, a Swiss couple discovers a sinking boat overloaded with refugees. Instead of helping, they call the Coast Guard and lose sight of the boat.

The Bridge over the River (Die Brücke über den Fluss)

Switzerland, 2016, Animation / Drama, 6 min., Director / Screenplay: Jadwiga Kowalska

A man on a bridge, separated from the love of his life. Wanting to be with her one last time, he decides to seek her in the hereafter.

Berlin Metanoia

Germany, 2016, Drama, 15 min., Director / Screenplay: Erik Schmitt

While all Berlin citizens go about their absurd everyday activities, Tore is haunted by dark shadows she can't get rid of. And as a bear escapes from its kennel, Tore has to face her most gruesome fear.

The Exchange (Der Wechsel)

Germany, 2016, Black & White, 6 min., Director / Screenplay: Kai Maria Steinkühler
A loaned 50 Euros bank note goes full circle and pays the debts of all its temporary owners – a parable on the financial crisis and the theory of money circulation.

[Out of Fra]me

Germany, 2016, Comedy, 19 min., Director / Screenplay: Sophie Linnenbaum

Out of sheer loneliness, Paul falls out of his frame and can't get back in. Struggling to be seen again, he joins a support group for people with film defects.

Exomoon

Austria / United Kingdom, 2015, animation, 6 min., Director / Screenplay: Gudrun Krebitz

Because she has been alone for a really long time and there's just no one else, she might as well live on the moon.

MeTube 2: August Sings Carmina Burana

Austria, 2016, drama, 5 min., Director / Screenplay: Daniel Moshel

After Elfie and her son August successfully proved themselves on their home webcam, the odd pair venture onto the street to present the biggest, boldest and sexiest flash mob the internet has ever seen!

Seas of Pearls (Perlenmeere)

Austria, 2016, avant-garde, 9 min., Director / Screenplay: Katrina Daschner
Jellyfish drifting through the water, details of a naked person, close-ups of deep-sea creatures. Small, precise picture waves set *Seas of Pearls* in motion.

Vintage Print

Austria, 2015, 13 min., Director / Screenplay: Siegfried A. Fruhauf
The delirious beauty of *Vintage Print* arises from a trinity of photography, film and digital image. A medial triptych through time as a stunning journey of discovery.

Introduced by Joe Bilancio, Director of Programming, DC Shorts.

Saturday, November 4, 4 pm
Western



In Bulgaria near the Greek border, a group of German construction workers arrives in the remote, mountainous and almost desert-like hinterland to install a water supply works for the local village. The job is tough and poorly prepared, and the construction process soon comes to a standstill. While the other construction workers mostly

avoid any contact with locals, Meinhard, one of the new arrivals, is different. Setting out on a horse that he found in the mountains, he rides down to the village and makes contact with the villagers. Here he meets Adrian, the head of the local stone quarry. And even though they don't share a common language, they slowly become friends. The foreign countryside awakens the sense of adventure in the German workers, but they are also forced to confront their own prejudices and mistrust as they deal with language barriers and cultural differences. When the men start to compete for recognition and favor from the local villagers, the stage is quickly set for a showdown.

In her third feature film, award-winning director **Valeska Grisebach** (b. 1968, Bremen) employed to her signature move of engaging amateur actors as her characters. The conventional relationship between character and star is turned on its head, making this movie an exciting experiment.

Saturday, November 4, 6:30 pm
Welcome to Germany (Willkommen bei den Hartmanns)



Angela and Richard Hartmann and their two adult children are a well-off Munich family with everything in its proper order. Or so it seems. Until Angelika, a retired teacher, decides – against the will of her skeptical husband – to take in a refugee. Soon afterwards, the young Nigerian Diallo moves into the luxurious Hartmann home and a whirlwind of both awkward and funny complications ensues. The picture-perfect

family is challenged with disruption as Angelika and Richard's marriage gets put to the test, their son Philip launches a promising career in China and gradually neglects his

own son and Diallo's chances of integration are threatened as racism, bureaucracy, hatred and skepticism come to a head.

Simon Verhoeven (b. 1972, Munich) studied in New York and Boston and appeared in numerous television and feature films. Continuing in a similar comedic vein to his award-winning *Men in the City* (*Männerherzen*, 2009), *this* is a comedy about one of Germany's most controversial current issues.

Saturday, November 4, 9 pm

Night of a 1000 Hours (Die Nacht der 1000 Stunden)



Philip, the ambitious heir of the Ullich family business, is confronted with very peculiar incidents when the family members gather at their palace in Vienna: His deceased ancestors suddenly re-appear from the dead and entrap Philip in a series of unforeseen events. And as if this wasn't mysterious enough, criminal machinations are picking up speed and even lead to murder. In the course

of a long night, a world in which ethics have been discarded and profit seems to be the main goal unfolds itself before Philip. While he battles his cousin for control over the family business and embarks on an illicit love affair with his newly alive aunt Renate, the ancestors reveal the true origins of the Ullich fortune. Philip finds himself in a struggle where it all comes down to who can be trusted in a web of lies, secrets and love affairs.

This is **Virgil Widrich's** (b. 1967, Salzburg) second feature film as writer and director. A spooky yet charming and mischievous family affair in which even death doesn't mean the end.

Reception with Austrian treats precedes the screening.

Sunday, November 5, 12 pm

Hanna's Sleeping Dogs (Hannas schlafende Hunde)



You shouldn't wake sleeping dogs. And there's a reason for that, as 9-year-old Johanna soon discovers. Living with her mother and grandmother in the provincial Austrian town of Wels in the late 1960s, Johanna discovers a family secret: They are Jewish. This simple fact - in a time during which Nazi sympathy may have disappeared from the streets but not from peoples' minds - throws her life into turmoil. The caretaker

bullies her, the religion teacher ignores her and her traumatized mother stops talking to people. Not much has changed after the war, and the severity of recent history is downplayed by the family's neighbors. Although Johanna's mother desperately tries to avoid attention, Johanna is determined to be proud of her heritage. But the dogs have awakened, and they have sharp teeth.

Award-winning director **Andreas Gruber** (b. 1954, Wels) adapted this feature film from

the novel by Elisabeth Escher. A carefully constructed house of lies crumbles at first – and eventually collapses completely.

Sunday, November 5, 2:30 pm

In Times of Fading Light (In Zeiten des abnehmenden Lichts)



In the early fall of 1989, the days of communist Germany are numbered as the structures of East Germany are starting to give in to the pressures of the West and the peaceful revolution. But in the living room of the Powileits, time stands still: it's Wilhelm's 90th birthday. A former resistance fighter and exile, he is an unapologetically hardline communist veteran. His wife Charlotte invited

neighbors and friends to celebrate this special occasion. But chaos sneaks in as an uninvited guest as Sascha, apparently the only person capable of setting up the expandable buffet table, fails to show up. While everybody does their best to pretend that the outside world is still as it was, a big, scandalous surprise waits in the wings: Sascha defected to the West a few days ago...

Having grown up in East Germany, **Matti Geschonnek** (b. 1952, Potsdam) created an empathetic adaptation of Eugen Ruge's semi-autobiographical bestseller about an established family gathering during the final days before the fall of the Wall.

Introduced by Forrest Finch, German PhD candidate, Georgetown University.

Sunday, November 5, 4:45 pm

Marija



Marija is a young Ukrainian woman who has a simple dream: to one day have her own hair salon. Earning her living as a cleaning woman in a hotel in Dortmund, she carefully puts away money each month to build her future life brick by brick. But when she gets fired without notice, her longed-for dream is suddenly postponed to a far away, uncertain future. Jobless and under financial pressure, she is forced to

look for alternatives. Refusing the ascribed role as a victim, she sets off on a fight for a freer, self-determined life. Demanding, determined and uncompromising, her body, her social relationships and her own feelings take a secondary importance to reach her goal. But the battle to escape this menacing net of dependencies is tough, and even the people who help her are far from being her friends.

In his feature film debut, **Michael Koch** (b. 1982, Lucerne) unveils the gray shades of Marija's character. The movie reveals neither a victim nor a villain, but a complex character in a complex life, and thus paints a universal portrait of immigrant life. Three of Koch's previous short films have received international awards.

Closing:

Sunday, November 5, 7:30 pm

The Divine Order (Die göttliche Ordnung)



Doing laundry, vacuuming, cooking and caring for her husband and two sons. That's the submissive routine that Nora, a 45-year-old housewife from a Swiss village in the early 70s, is stuck in. The seemingly peaceful Swiss countryside has not yet been affected by the social upheavals that the May 1968 movement caused. But when her husband refuses to allow her to work – a privilege granted to him by law – the quiet and well-

liked Nora starts campaigning for equality and the right to vote. A difficult task when even Mrs. Wimpf, the leader of her social club, regards gender equality as a “sin against nature.” As developments gradually unfold, there's no clear turning point or villain, but instead a society that needs to redefine its identity as a whole.

Swiss-Italian director **Petra Volpe's** (b. 1970, Suhr) most recent feature film retells the little-known fact about the late arrival of women's voting rights in Switzerland.

Reception with a “Divine” cocktail and Swiss treats precedes the screening. Conversation with Petra Volpe via Skype follows, moderated by Sky Sitney.

Tickets:

\$12.50, \$11 for Students and Friends of the Goethe-Institut, \$9.50 for Seniors

Opening Night Screening followed by Party at E Street Cinema with Complimentary Wine, Beer, and German Snacks: \$27.50

Closing Night Pre-Film Reception with a Divine cocktail and Swiss treats: \$17.50

More: www.filmneu.org

About the Goethe-Institut:

Founded in 1990, Goethe-Institut Washington, DC is a center for German culture and language. From its location in the lively Downtown, the Goethe-Institut Washington reaches out to both individuals and organizations in the community, bridging the past, present, and future with a variety of high-quality events.

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