



MONDAY, JANUARY 17, 4:30 PM

TWELVE CHAIRS (ZWÖLF STÜHLE)

Germany, 2004, color, 198 minutes
In Russian and Ukrainian with English subtitles
Director Ulrike Ottinger Screenplay Ulrike Ottinger,
from the novel by Ilya Ilf, Yevgeniy Petrov Producer
Ulrike Ottinger Cast Georgi Deliyev, Genadi Skarga,
Svetlana Dyagilyeva, Boris Raev, Olga Ravitzkaya
World Sales Ulrike Ottinger Film Production

The dying mother-in-law of former nobleman Ippolit Matveyevich Vorobyaniyev (Genadi Skarga) reveals that during the Bolshevik Revolution a decade earlier, she stashed valuable jewelry in one of a dozen salon chairs now scattered across the country. Partnered with conman Ostop Bender (Georgi Deliyev) and working against renegade Orthodox priest Father Fyodor (Boris Raev), Vorobyaniyev races to find his fortune. With its universal themes of avarice and compromise, the classic 1928 novel *Dvenadtsat stulyev* has inspired filmmakers in the Soviet Union, Cuba and even America (Mel Brooks!). Veteran iconoclastic German filmmaker Ulrike Ottinger filmed at the Romanian/Moldavian border, in Black Sea spa towns and Crimean mountain Tartar villages, as well as throughout modern-day Odessa. Placing her period-costumed actors in contemporary settings, this leisurely version underscores the relevance of the tale in today's free-for-all world. With German narration straight from the novel, this newest reincarnation of TWELVE CHAIRS is sly fun.

-Eddie Cockrell



Ulrike Ottinger studied art in Munich and has been living in Berlin since 1973. Her extensive filmography includes FREAK ORLANDO (1980), JOAN OF ARC OF MONGOLIA (1989), TAIGA (1992), EXIT SHANGHAI (1997) and SOUTHEAST PASSAGE (2002).

TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 7:15 PM
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 9:30 PM

ADDICTED TO ACTING (DIE SPIELWÜTIGEN)

Germany, 2004, color, 105 minutes,
In German with English subtitles
Director and Screenplay Andres Veiel Producer Klaus Volkenborn Directors of
Photography Hans Rombach, Lutz Reitemeier, Johan Feindt, Jörg Jeshel, Rainer
Hoffmann, Klaus Deubel, Pierre Bouchez Cast Prodomos Antoniadis, Constanze
Becker, Karina Plachetka, Stephanie Stremler World Sales Timebandits Films

Over 100 aspiring young thespians apply each year to Berlin's prestigious Ernst Busch Academy, which is known for its adherence to tough-love Russian techniques employed to gauge their true commitment to the craft. Of the 25 or 30 or so who make the cut for the semester beginning January 1997, BLACK BOX BRD director Andres Veiel, who wanted to make a film "about growing up," focuses on four: awkwardly intense Prodomos Antoniadis, initially obsessed with Travis Bickle monologues from "Taxi Driver"; Constanze Becker, whose unfocused intensity morphs into a command of powerful female roles; Karina Plachetka, forever chided as too shy; and blonde-haired Stephanie Stremler, who applied repeatedly before finally gaining admission. That each of his four subjects is revealed to possess the talent and strength to survive the next four grueling years is a tribute to Veiel's instincts and provides inspiration for those who follow in their footsteps.

-Eddie Cockrell

Andres Veiel presented his lauded documentary BLACK BOX BRD at the 2002 edition of this program. His award-winning documentaries include A WINTER NIGHT'S DREAM (1991), BALAGAN (1993) and THE SURVIVORS (1995).



TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 9:30 PM,
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 7:15 PM

SIGN OF ESCAPE (AUSWEGE)

Austria, 2003, color, 93 minutes
In German and Bosnian with English subtitles
Director Nina Kusturica Screenplay Barbara Albert Producers
Stefan Pfundner, Nina Kusturica Cast Liese Lyon, Manfred Stella,
Mira Miljkovic, Igor Bararon, Dagmar Schwarz, Kurt Hümer
World Sales Austrian Film Commission

In contemporary Vienna, three women of different ages and social backgrounds are victims of domestic violence. Boorish Werner (Manfred Stella) is banished from home by local police after he strips wife Claudia (Liese Lyon) and locks her out of the house. Increasingly jealous for no apparent reason, Dragan (Igor Bararon) whisks his two children away from wife Sladjana (Mira Miljkovic), who is petrified at being abandoned without proper Austrian documentation. And though she's apparently never been hit by him, Margit (Dagmar Schwarz) fights the numbness left by contemptuous husband Hans (Kurt Hümer). First-time feature filmmaker Nina Kusturica is a distant relative of the more celebrated Emir Kusturica, but her clean, no-nonsense style could not be more different. Sponsored by a score of women's institutions and support centers, the powerful drama SIGN OF ESCAPE was written by director Barbara Albert, whose multi-leveled FREE RADICALS was a highlight of last year's program.

-Eddie Cockrell

Nina Kusturica was born in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, grew up in Sarajevo and moved to Vienna in 1992. SIGN OF ESCAPE is her feature film debut, and she is completing a documentary portrait of Austrian director Michael Hanecke.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 7 PM AND 9:40 PM

PEAS AT 5:30 (ERBSEN AUF HALB 6)

Germany, 2003, color, 111 minutes
In German with English subtitles
Director Lars Büchel Screenplay Ruth Toma, Lars
Büchel Producers Hanno Huth, Ralf Zimmermann
Cast Fritz Haberlandt, Hilmir Sner Gudnason,
Harald Schrott, Tina Engel, Jenny Gröllmann
World Sales Senator Film

Discussion with director Lars Büchel will follow the screenings

Never one for going gently into the night, good or otherwise, headstrong theater director Jakob (Hilmir Sner Gudnason), a native Icelander relocated to Germany, reacts to being blinded in an automobile accident by cursing the darkness in typically iconoclastic fashion. He refuses to learn anything about navigating the sighted world, coldly rejecting the overtures of the rehabilitation specialist, Lily (Fritzi Haberlandt), sent to assist him. This being the film billed in Germany as "Die wunderbare Geschichte einer blinden Liebe": "The Wonderful Story of a Blind Love" the two of course begin to tumble for each other and embark on a wildly improbable road trip to Russia's far-flung White Sea. Unafraid to embrace and even gently spoof melodramatic coincidence and blind chance, this beguiling, award-winning tale of finding one's bearings in a world of darkness is every bit as mysterious, mischievous, charming and obvious as its cryptic yet inspired title.

-Eddie Cockrell

Lars Büchel studied theater and philosophy at Berlin's Free University and later attended Cologne's Academy of Media Arts. His films include FOUR STORIES, FIVE DEATHS (1996/97), which won the Max Ophüls Award, and NOW OR NEVER (2000).




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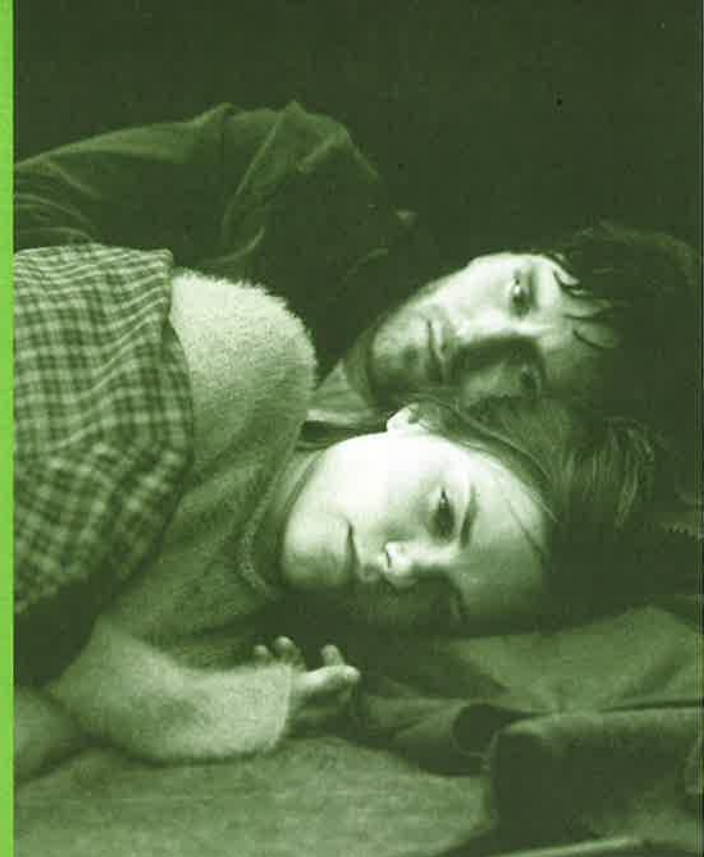

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Friday Night Opening Screening of
The Edukators and Reception: \$20

Reception
with DJ will follow at the Goethe-Institut (812 Seventh Street, between H and I Streets, several blocks north of the E Street Cinema) featuring complimentary Beck's Beer and German wine, and food provided by the Embassy of Switzerland, Old Europe Restaurant, Cafe Mozart, Heidelberg Pastry Shoppe, Marvelous Market, Whole Foods Market and the Swiss Bakery and Pastry Shop


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13th Annual Film Festival

2005

New Films From Germany, Switzerland and Austria

January 14 - 20

German-language cinema grew ever healthier in 2004, and that progress is reflected in the 13th edition of New Films from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Opening with Hans Weingartner's provocative, politically-charged Cannes competition entry THE EDUKATORS and closing with Lars Büchel's exhilarating, offbeat love story PEAS AT 5:30, the program is nothing if not diverse: the Swiss military comedy READY, STEADY, CHARLIE! shares the spotlight with German mainstay Ulrike Ottinger's subversively funny, three-hour version of the Russian classic TWELVE CHAIRS, while Austria's wrenching domestic abuse drama SIGN OF ESCAPE appears alongside the cool hitman thriller SOUNDLESS. SCHULTZE GET THE BLUES is a deadpan comic crowd-pleaser, while a musical portrait, THE NOMI SONG, and the thespian saga ADDICTED TO ACTING represent the documentary form. It's a program as well-rounded as the industry itself.

- Eddie Cockrell

Eddie Cockrell is a Maryland-based *Variety* critic who reviews new films from the Berlin, Toronto, Karlovy Vary and Montreal festivals.



OPENING

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 14,
7 PM, (OPENING NIGHT)
SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 7 PM**

THE EDUKATORS (DIE FETTEN JAHRE SIND VORBEI)

Germany/Austria, 2004,
color, 127 minutes
In German with English subtitles
Director Hans Weingartner
Screenplay Katharina Held, Hans
Weingartner **Producers** Hans
Weingartner, Antonin Svoboda
Cast Daniel Brühl, Julia Jentsch, Stipe
Erceg, Burghart Klausner
US Distributor IFC Films
World Sales Celluloid Dreams

Discussion with Eddie Cockrell and Karsten Aurich, line producer for *The Edukators*, will follow the opening night screening

In a love triangle that comes refreshingly close to a politically-charged German spin on Truffaut's *JULES AND JIM*, three idealistic young people become friends in contemporary Berlin. Firebrand Jan (Daniel Brühl, the white-hot young star of *GOOD BYE, LENIN!*), rails against the "capitalist dictatorship," while the somewhat less committed Peter (Stipe Erceg) and then newcomer Jule (Julia Jentsch) go along with his novel approach to protest: stealing nothing and leaving only a note saying "Your Days of Plenty are Numbered," or maybe "You Have Too Much Money," they break into a series of affluent villas, rearranging the furniture and belongings as a startlingly intimate act of rebellion. When the aftermath of one such novel home invasion results in the impromptu kidnapping of homeowner Hardenberg (Burghart Klausner), *The Edukators* find themselves reluctant pupils of an inevitable re-education. Exhibiting a deliberate, sure hand with his genuinely unique premise, Austrian writer-director Hans Weingartner's *THE EDUKATORS*, which competed in Cannes 2004, is a provocative drama that reflects a refreshingly strong sense of youthful, headstrong and ultimately flawed idealism.

-Eddie Cockrell

Hans Weingartner studied physics and neuroscience in his native Austria, earning a camera assistant diploma along the way before beginning media arts postgraduate studies in 1997. He made his directing debut with *THE WHITE SOUND* (2000).

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 9:50 PM,
SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 4:15 PM**

THE NOMI SONG

Germany, 2004, color and black & white, 99 minutes, in English
Director Andrew Horn **Screenplay** Andrew Horn **Producers** Thomas
Mertens, Annette Pisacane, Andrew Horn **Cast** Klaus Nomi, Ann
Magnuson, Gabriel Le Fari, David MacDermot, Page Wood, Tony
Frere, Man Parrish, Kristian Hoffman, Ron Johnson, Kenny Scharf,
Anthony Scibelli, Alan Platt, David Bowie **U.S. Distributor** Palm
Pictures

He came from Bavaria, a trained opera singer with a spectacular counter-tenor range and an obsession with futurism that extended to outrageous costumes and monochrome look: Klaus Nomi was, remembers photographer Anthony Scibelli, "the first person I'd ever met who'd been chemically treated to become black and white." But that voice... From his early days in the 1970s New York underground scene to his appearance backing David Bowie on "Saturday Night Live" through his disastrous solo tours and European recording stardom, director Andrew Horn's *THE NOMI SONG* assembles a dazzling collection of vintage clips and contemporary remembrances. Nomi was one of the first celebrity victims of AIDS, succumbing to the disease in 1983. Perhaps vet rocker Richard Hell said it best: "That is the ultimate message of the New Wave: if you amass the courage that is necessary, you can completely invent yourself. You can be your own hero."

-Eddie Cockrell

Andrew Horn was born in New York and has worked as a director and writer in Berlin since 1989. His films include *DOOMED LOVE* (1984) and *THE BIG BLUE* (1988). He also produced and co-wrote *EAST SIDE STORY* (1997), director Dana Ranga's documentary on Marxist musicals.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 2 PM,
SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 2 PM**

THE WILD SOCCER BUNCH

(DIE WILDEN KERLE)
Germany, 2003, color, 94 minutes,
in German with English subtitles
Director and Screenplay Joachim
Masannek **Producers** Ewa Karlström,
Andreas Ulmke-Smeaton
Director of Photography Sonja Rom
Cast Jimi Blue Ochseneckht, Raban
Bieling, Sarah Kim Gries, Constantin
Gastmann, Wilson Gonzalez
Ochseneckht, Marlon Wessel, Jonathan
Beck, Kevin Iannotta, Leon Wessel-Masannek, Fillipo Dattola, Florian Heppert, Nicolas Michalczewski, Rufus
Beck, Cornelia Froboess, Uwe Ochseneckht **World Sales** Telepool

When 14-year-old Fat Mikey and his Invincibles muscle Leon and his Wild Soccer Bunch off their home pitch of Devil's Gulch, the boys must overcome the twin terrors of adults and girls to win back their home turf. A high-octane, tough-talking sports comedy in the freewheeling tradition of German young people's hits *EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES* and *BIBI BLOCKSBERG*, *THE WILD SOCCER BUNCH* grew out of the children's books writer-director Joachim Masannek wrote to fancifully recount his adventures as a little league coach. The novelty of casting the children of German screen stalwarts Uwe Ochseneckht and Rufus Beck alongside their dads gives the film the distinct air of a joyous family affair. Winner of a Bavarian Film Award, the runaway success of *THE WILD SOCCER BUNCH* has prompted the inevitable sequel, currently in post-production. As one soundtrack ditty proclaims, "it's a cool, it's a rule, it's awesome and wonderful."

-Eddie Cockrell

Joachim Masannek studied German studies, philosophy and film in Munich. He has worked as a production designer, lighting technician, cameraman and author. *THE WILD SOCCER BUNCH* is his feature-film debut.



**SATURDAY, JANUARY 15,
7 PM AND 9:15 PM**

SOUNDLESS (LAUTLOS)

Germany, 2004,
color, 95 minutes,
in German with
English subtitles
Director Mennan Yapo
Screenplay Lars-Olav Beier
Producers Stefan Arndt, Tom

Tykwier **Cast** Joachim Krül, Nadja Uhl, Christian Berkel, Rudolf Martin, Lisa Martinek, Peter Fitz, Mehmet Kurtulus **World Sales** Beta Cinema

Discussion with director Mennan Yapo will follow the screenings

A taciturn pro hitman, Viktor (Joachim Krül), falls for Nina (Nadja Uhl), the beautiful squeeze of his dirty cop victim, in the taut psychological thriller *SOUNDLESS*. As he subsequently prepares to off a Russian politico, Viktor and Nina realize they're soulmates-even as they elude the determined Inspector Lang (Christian Berkel), an eccentric profiler who superstitiously buys new shoes for each case but manages to trace Viktor. "C.S.I."-style, through a bizarre childhood trauma. Krül, who is also a co-producer, will be familiar to fans of *RUN LOLA RUN* director Tom Tykwier, who features the actor in his own films and serves as a co-producer here. The kind of film where even the floors of indoor parking garages glisten with moisture, this immensely self-assured second feature from film industry veteran and actor Mennan Yapo charges a genre many think they already know with a renewed sense of urgency and depth.

-Eddie Cockrell

Mennan Yapo was born the son of Turkish parents in Munich. He worked in German film marketing, wrote scripts in English and German and acted in Peter Greenaway's *THE PILLOW BOOK* and Wolfgang Becker's *GOOD BYE, LENIN!* *SOUNDLESS* is his second feature.



SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 4:15 PM AND 9:40 PM

SCHULTZE GETS THE BLUES

Germany, 2003,
color, 113 minutes,
in German and English with English subtitles
Director Michael Schorr **Screenplay** Michael Schorr
Producer Jens Körner **Cast** Horst Krause, Harald
Warmbrunn, Karl-Fred Müller, Rosemarie Deibel,
Wilhelmine Horschig, Anne V. Angelle
US Distributor Paramount Classics



SCHULTZE GETS THE BLUES is a warmly humanistic story of discovery that represents a modest triumph of visual storytelling for writer-director Michael Schorr, who won a special jury prize for direction in the Venice festival's Upstream sidebar program for this life-affirming and promising directorial debut.

-Eddie Cockrell

Michael Schorr studied philosophy, music and film before enrolling in the directing program at the Konrad Wolf academy in Potsdam-Babelsberg. He made three documentaries prior to this dramatic debut.

MONDAY, JANUARY 17, 2:15 PM AND 9 PM

READY, STEADY, CHARLIE! (ACHTUNG, FERTIG, CHARLIE!)

Switzerland, 2003, color, 93 minutes
In Swiss-German with English subtitles
Director Mike Eschmann **Screenplay** Michael Sauter, David
Keller **Producer** Lukas Hobi **Cast** Michael Koch, Melanie
Winiger, Marco Rima, Mia Aegerter, Martin Rapold
World Sales Telepool



Literally at the altar, Swiss-Italian groom Antonio (Michael Koch) is dragged off by military police to the basic training he's thus far eluded. As bride Laura (Mia Aegerter) and her Sicilian family stew, Antonio learns to fit in with the rag-tag fusiliers unit commanded by cigar-chomping Captain Reiker (Marco Rima). In the midst of the hijinks, Antonio finds time to woo buff'n'beautiful recruit Bluntschi (Melanie Winiger), who happens to be Reiker's illegitimate daughter. Billing itself as "the 'original' Swiss Army comedy," the STRIPES-like *READY, STEADY, CHARLIE!* scores a number of well-aimed strikes at military buffoonery. It has also been nominated for the Swiss Film Prize and made a star of its engaging, Zach Braff-ish leading man, becoming, along the way, the most successful home-grown film ever released. The distinctive title is the Swiss drill sergeant's equivalent of extra push-ups for laggards, a la "jump down and give me 20."

-Eddie Cockrell

Mike Eschmann was born in Zürich. He studied at the London International Film School and The American Film Institute in Los Angeles. Following numerous shorts, he made his feature debut with the romantic comedy *KILIMANJARO: HOW TO SPELL LOVE* (2001).