

AC AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE



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A CO-PRODUCTION OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT AND THE AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE

# OCT 13 — 16 2023

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# 17<sup>TH</sup> FESTIVAL OF GERMAN FILM





# We are excited to share news about the German Currents Film Festival 2023!

As the new Director of the Goethe-Institut in LA. I am proud to present this year's edition of German Currents. More than just a series of film screenings, German Currents is a platform for cultural exchange, connecting German films and filmmakers with the greater Los Angeles community. This year's festival takes place from October 13-16 with screenings at the American Cinematheque and the Goethe-Institut.

German Currents 2023 opens Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, at the Los Feliz 3 Theatre, with the exclusive US premiere of director Birgit Möller's multi-award-winning festival favorite, FRANKY FIVE STAR, starring Lena Urzendowsky (COCOON, Netflix's DARK, and HOW TO SELL DRUGS ONLINE (Fast). A discussion with Ms. Urzendowsky will follow the screening. The opening night event continues with the LA premiere of veteran German Filmmaker Fatih Akin's German box office smash. RHINEGOLD (RHEINGOLD).

Best Youth Film.

All the best.

# DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

The festival weekend continues with the US premiere of David Wnendt's SUN AND CONCRETE (SONNE UND BETON). adapted from Felix Lobrecht's best-selling novel. David Wnendt (COMBAT GIRLS, WETLANDS) will be present to discuss his film. Additional screenings include the US premiere of the popular short film showcase NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER, the US premiere of Axel Ranisch's ORPHEA IN LOVE, and the LA premiere of the retro-futuristic THE ORDINARIES, directed by Sophie Linnenbaum. To complete the festival program, German Currents will bring back its popular family matinee with a screening of MISSION ULJA FUNK, directed by Barbara Kronenberg, winner of the German Film Award for

We look forward to seeing you at the festival!

# **Birgit Ostermeier & the German Currents team**

# **Tired of reading subtitles?**

Learn German at the Goethe-Institut.



7PM @ THE LOS FELIZ 3

**OCT 13TH** 

SAT













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# **OCT 13TH 10PM @ THE LOS FELIZ 3**



LA PREMIERE **OPENING NIGHT FEATURE** 

RHINEGOLD (RHEINGOLD)



# 3:45 PM **US PREMIERE**

NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2023



# 7:30 PM **US PREMIERE**

THE ORDINARIES

# **MORE INFORMATION** GERMANCURRENTS.COM

# sönke andresen DASCHA DAUENHAUER LENA URZENDOWSKY REZA MEMARI WRITER & DIRECTOR COMPOSER ACTOR WELKET BUNGUÉ LUKAS NATHRATH **ALISON KUHN** DIRECTOR, ACTOR & WRITER ACTOR DIRECTOR, ACTOR & WRITER

# FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS THE FILMMAKERS

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**OPENING NIGHT | LA PREMIERE | IN PERSON: LENA URZENDOWSKY** FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> @ 7:00 PM LOS FELIZ 3

# **FRANKY FIVE STAR**



Introverted 20-something Franky (Urzendowsky) is unpredictable and erratic. Her best friend and roommate, Katja (Öz), knows about her changing moods, but Franky has never revealed her biggest secret. Deep in her head, she has an old-fashioned hotel that is inhabited by four odd but lovable characters: a strict concierge (Drassl), a seductive chambermaid (Killer), a bell boy (Hönig), and a child (Andresen). Whenever Franky is in an uncomfortable situation, one of the four personalities rides the elevator and takes control of her emotions.

Too busy dealing with this inner chaos, Franky has never let herself fall in love. Things change when she meets Katja's new boyfriend, Hasi (Djavid). As Franky starts to fall for Hasi, her inner personalities take over, and things spiral out of control. Urzendowsky's outstanding performance as the quirky yet charming Franky offers an imaginative and refreshing take on coming-of-age and finding your true self, or more than one.





# ermany/Finland (2023) 114 min. DCP Projection German/English/Finnish with English Subtitles

Director Birgit Möller Screenplay Knut Mierswe, Birgit Möller **Cinematography J-P Passi** Cast Lena Urzendowsky, Oona Airola, Paul Pötsch, Cino Diavid. Sven Hoenig. Gerti Drassl. Sophie Killer. Cito Andresen Producers Jamila Wenske Production Company Achtung Panda!

# Awards & Nominations:

- Neiße Filmfestival 2023: Audience Award, Feature
- Filmfest Bremen 2023: Honorable Mention
- Max Ophüls Preis 2023: Ecumenical Jury Award, Feature

## World Sales

Patra Spanou Film patraspanou.com



Birgit Möller was born in Osnabrück, Germany and studied Cinematography and Directing at German Film and Television Academy Berlin (DFFB), completing her graduation film VALERIE in 2006. Since 2004, she directs commercials for TV and Cinema. She is an alumna of the Villa Aurora (2008) and Binger Director's Lab (2011). Frank Five Star is her second feature film.



# Office

An initiative of GOETHE INSTITUT

Film



Federal Foreign Office

Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media

**OPENING NIGHT | LA PREMIERE** FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> @ 10:00 PM LOS FELIZ 3

# **RHINEGOLD (RHEINGOLD)**



From the depths of an Iragi prison to the top of the German charts, the rise of German gangster rapper and producer Giwar Hajabi, a.k.a. Xatar, is the stuff of legend. Born in 1981, during the Iranian Revolution, he fled as a child with his Kurdish parents via Irag to Germany in the mid-1980s. In Bonn, he grows up in a housing project, where he must start from the bottom. As a teen, dreaming of fame and fortune in the music industry, Xatar slips into petty crime but quickly proves himself a major dealer. When a cocaine shipment goes missing, leaving him in debt to a drug cartel, a desperate Xatar plans a large-scale gold heist. As everything goes wrong and Xatar lands in prison, another door opens, thanks to his passion for music.

Multi-award-winning veteran filmmaker Fatih Akin's adaptation of Xatar's autobiographical novel Alles oder Nix (All or Nothing) is gritty, raw, and executed with all the style, swagger, humor, and intelligence found in its subject. Emilio Sakraya's powerful performance as the adult Xatar helps to make the film Akin's biggest box office hit yet.





## ermany, Netherlands, Morocco, Mexico (2022) 140 min. DCP Projection, German, Arabic, Kurdish, French, Dutch, Turkish with English Subtitles

Writer-Director Fatih Akin **Cinematography** Rainer Klausmann Music »Xatar« Giwar Haiabi Cast Emilio Sakrava, Mona Pirzad, Kardo Razzazi, Ilves Raoul, Sogol Faghani, Hüseyin Top, Arman Kashani, Ensar "Eno" Albayrak, Denis Moschitto, Adam Bousdoukos, Ugur Yücel Producers Fatih Akin. Nurhan Sekerci-Porst, Herman Weigel Production Company Bombero International GmbH & CO KG

# Awards & Nominations

- German Film Awards 2023: (Nominated) Best Feature
- Bavarian Film Awards 2023: Best Film
- FBW 2022: Prädikat besonders wertvoll

# US DISTRIBUTOR

Strand Releasing strandreleasing.com



Fatih Akin was born in Hamburg, Germany, where he continues to live and work. Prior to studying at the Hamburg College of the Arts, he completed SENSIN - DU BIST ES (1995), his first short as writer-director. With his award-winning films including HEAD ON (2004), THE EDGE OF HEAVEN (2007), SOUL KITCHEN (2009), THE CUT (2014). IN THE FADE (2017), and THE GOLDEN GLOVE (2019), Akin has risen to become one of the most influential German directors. RHEINGOLD premiered at the Filmfest Hamburg.

# US PREMIERE | IN PERSON: DAVID WNENDT SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> @ 1:15 PM GOETHE-INSTITUT

# SUN AND CONCRETE (SONNE UND BETON)



It is a record breaking hot summer in Berlin. For German teens Lukas (Arcos), Gino (Klein-Heßling) und Julius (Wiemer), life in the sprawling Gropiusstadt housing complex in Berlin's Neukölln district is rough, to say the least. The parks stink, are over-run with drug dealers, and broken bottles are everywhere. Here, you're either a gangster, or a victim. With stress at home, no cash, and no luck with girls, the three friends are certainly no gangsters. While ditching school one day to buy weed, the boys are caught between two rival dealer-gangs who leave Lukas severely beaten and demand the boys pay 500 Euros as protection money. With no way to come up with the cash, Lukas' new classmate Sanchez (Maldonado-Morales) proposes a heist: simply break into the school, steal the brand-new computers and re-sell them. Problem solved...almost.

A German box office smash-hit, Wnendt's (Combat Girls, Wetlands) adaptation of German stand-up comedian and best-selling author Felix Lobrecht's novel SONNE UND BETON is a raw, often violent and street-slang-filled portrait of friendship on the rough streets of the city – this too, is Berlin!



## Germany (2023) 107 min. Digital Projection German/English with English Subtitles

Director David Wnendt Screenplay David Wnendt, Felix Lobrecht Cinematography Jieun Yi Music Enis Rotthoff, Konstantin Scherer Cast Levy Rico Arcos, Vincent Wiemer, Rafael Luis Klein-Heßling, Aaron Maldonado-Morales, Luvre47, Wael Alkhatib, Lucio101, Jörg Hartmann, Derman Eker, Leon Ullrich Producers Franziska Suppee, Fabian Gasmia, David Wnendt Production Company Seven Elephants GmbH

## Awards & Nominations:

Neiße Filmfestival 2023: Audience Award, Feature
Filmfest Bremen 2023: Honorable Mention
Max Ophüls Preis 2023: Ecumenical Jury Award, Feature

World Sales Constantin Film constantin.film



David Wnendt was born in Gelsenkirchen, Germany and grew up in Islamabad, Miami, Brussels, Prague and Meckenheim. He studied at FAMU in Prague and at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf. In 2011, his graduation feature COMBAT GIRLS won prizes including Best Screenplay at the German Film Awards. His film adaptions of the bestsellers WETLANDS and LOOK WHO'S BACK were big hits; his international production THE SUNLIT NIGHT screened at Sundance in 2019. In 2018, he co-founded the Seven Elephants production company which produced UND MORGEN DIE GANZE WELT (2020) and SONNE UND BETON (2023). David Wnendt is a Villa Aurora Fellow (2012).

# FLI

**Celebrating Movies From Europe** 





# US PREMIERE |SHORT FILM SHOWCASE SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> @ 3:45 PM GOETHE-INSTITUT

# NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2023



# NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER

Germany (2023), 108 min. Various Languages with English Subtitles

**COLLAGE | KOLAJ** Gülce Besen (Animation, 2022, 8min.)

FREE NIGHTS | FREIE NÄCHTE Oliver Adam Kusio (Fiction, 2023, 15 min.)

HUGE CHOICE Oleksandra Krasavtseva (Animation, Experimental, 2022, 3 min.)

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE TODAY | MUSS JA NICHT SEIN, DASS ES HEUTE IST Sophia Groening (Fiction, 2022, 8 min.)

**KILLING BAGHEERA** Muschirf Shekh Zeyn (Fiction, 2022, 13 min.)

LONG TIME NO TECHNO Eugenia Bakurin (Experimental Found Footage, 2022, 4 min.)

**PRIMITIVE TIMES | UHRMENSCHEN** Hao Yu (Animation, 2023, 6 min.)

**SWIMMING LESSON | SCHWIMMSTUNDE** Lisa Hürtgen (Fiction, 2022, 10 min.)

**VOLVER AL SUR | RETURNING SOUTH** Sofía Ayala (Fiction, 2022, 15 min.)

NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2023 German Films Service + Marketing GmbH german-films.de

Presented by German Films and the German Federal Film Board (FFA), the 13th edition of this beloved annual showcase presents the year's most remarkable new directors and outstanding student short films to international audiences and the film industry. The program combines young talents – the NEXT GENERATION of German Cinema – together with the best German shorts under 5 minutes – the winners of the FFA's SHORT TIGER Award 2023. The 9 short films for NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2023 were selected by an expert jury: director Sophie Linnenbaum (THE ORDINARIES), Katrin Küchler (MDR unicato), and Dr. Christian Bräuer (Yorck Cinemas). They had to choose from 61 submissions from 13 film schools and 6 additional shorts (up to 15 min) made by independent producers preselected by a jury from the AG Kurzfilm. Representing Germany's diversity of forms, genres, and skillful filmmaking talent that international audiences have come to expect from German shorts, these deeply personal and universal stories confirm the notion that short film is an independent art form deserving of the big screen and the awareness of audiences worldwide.

# LA PREMIERE SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> @ 5:15 PM GOETHE-INSTITUT

# **ORPHEA IN LOVE**



Nele (Mesak) is a dreamer who escapes from her dreary everyday life into the soulful world of opera and music. Originally from a small town in Estonia, she scrapes by as a call center agent and cloakroom attendant at the State Opera in a big German city. When she meets the street dancer and pickpocket Kolya (Badalamenti), it is a fateful encounter for both of them- the meeting of soul mates. The pair quickly lose themselves in their own world filled with music and dance. As the two grow closer, Nele must confront the demons of her past and descend into the underworld to save their budding love. When talent scout Höllbach (Pinkowski) learns of Nele's enormous singing talent, he offers her the chance of a lifetime: a career as an opera singer. Axel Ranisch's endearing adaptation of Orpheus and Eurydice blends phantasy, kitsch, and realism, resulting in a cinematic opera pastiche between Puccini, Handel, and German pop singer Christian Steiffen.





## Germany (2022) 107 min. Digital Projection German/English with English Subtitles

Director AXEL RANISCH Screenplay Axel Ranisch, Sönke Andresen Cinematography Dennis Pauls Cast Mirjam Mesak, Guido Badalamenti, Heiko Pinkowski, Ursina Lardi, Christina Große, Ursula Werner, Tim Oliver Schultz Producers Heiko Pinkowski, Jan Bremme, Axel Ranisch, Alexander Krötsch, Dennis Pauls, Isabel Iturriagagoitia, Anne Baeker Production Company schöne neue filme, Sehr gute Filme GmbH, EuroArts Music International

# **FESTIVALS & AWARDS**

- · Septemberfest der Bayerischen Staatsoper Weltpremiere
- 56. HoF IFF
- 52. IFF Rotterdam Internationale Premiere
- 32. FilmFestival Cottbus
- 44. Biberacher Filmfestspiele
- 32. Kinofest Lünen
- 16. Ahrenshooper Filmnächte Förderpreis Award

## **World Sales**

MissingFILMs missingfilms.de



Axel Ranisch is a director, actor, producer and media educator. Since 2002, he has made films at a record-setting pace. From 2004 to 2014, he studied directing with Rosa von Praunheim, Andreas Kleinert and Helke Misselwitz at the Film and Television University (HFF) "Konrad Wolf" Potsdam Babelsberg. In 2011, he, along with fellow HFF alumni Dennis Pauls and Anne Banker, and actor Heiko Pinkowski – founded the production company "Sehr gute Filme." Axel Ranisch is a Villa Aurora Fellow (2014).

# LA PREMIERE SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>™</sup> @ 7:30 PM GOETHE-INSTITUT

# **THE ORDINARIES**



The setting: a retro-futuristic world where life is like a film and society is divided into three classes- at the top are the "Main characters," in the middle are the "Supporting characters," and at the bottom are the "Outtakes." "Supporting character," Paula (Sendel) is at the top of her class at the Main Character School, where she is preparing for the most critical test of her life: to become a "main character." The one thing holding Paula back is that she can't seem to present an emotional monologue with rousing music. In search of a solution, she finds herself in the underbelly of this cinematic world. On the fringes of the storyline and lost amongst the Outtakes. Paula learns that she may have more in common with them than she could have dreamed. Linnenbaum's multi-award-winning feature debut is a lavish, allegorical satire steeped in references to cinema history, intercut with musical numbers, and dressed in Hollywood Golden Age aesthetic that tells a strange adventure of self-discovery, classism, and conformity.



# ermany (2022) 124 min. German with English Subtitles

Director Sophie Linnenbaum Screenplay Sophie Linnenbaum, Michael Fetter Nathansky **Cinematography** Valentin Selmke **Cast** Fine Sendel, Jule Böwe, Henning Peker, Noah Tinwa, Sira Faal, Denise M'Bave Producers Laura Klippel, Britta Strampe Production Company Bandenfilm, ZDF – Das Kleine Fernsehspiel, Filmuniversität Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF

## SELECT AWARDS

- Bayerischer Filmpreis 2023: New Director Award
- Filmfestival Türkei Deutschland 2023: Best Feature
- IFF Schlingel 2022: Goethe-Institut Children's & Youth Film Award
- Exground Filmfest Wiesbaden 2022: Das Brett - German Feature
- FILMZ Mainz 2022: Best Feature
- Filmfest Braunschweig 2022: KINEMA-Jury Prize. Heimspielpreis - Best Acting
- FBW 2022: Prädikat: besonders wertvoll
- FIRST STEPS Awards 2022: Best Feature
- Filmkunstmesse Leipzig 2022: Audience Award
- Filmkunstfest MV 2022: DEFA-Foundation Award
- Filmfest München 2022: Best Director. Best Production



**World Sales** The Match Factory the-match-factory.com

Sophie Linnenbaum was born in Nuremberg, Germany. After completing her diploma in psychology and working as a playwright, she studied directing at the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF and is shooting series and documentaries. Her playfully pointed short films have won several awards and screened at festivals, worldwide. THE ORDINARIES is her graduation film and first fiction feature.



# Don't become a member, become a friend!

Dear German Currents Film Festival Patrons.

For the past seventeen years, the Goethe-Institut and the German Currents Film Festival, with the support of Friends of Goethe of Southern California, have continued to bring the best in German cinema to Los Angeles.

This October, the Goethe-Institut also celebrates the second year in its new space in the Westlake/MacArthur Park neighborhood. As part of the Neighborhood Interpretive Center project, the Goethe-Institut has served as project partner and host for a diverse series of programs presented by local community organizations and partners, including live performances, exhibitions and art installations, concerts, and workshops.

As we celebrate another exciting edition of German Currents, I invite you to assist the Friends of Goethe in fulfilling our mandate to support the Goethe-Institut's work. Your tax-deductible contribution to the Friends of Goethe helps directly support the Goethe-Institut's exciting and engaging cultural programming in Los Angeles and around Southern California

On behalf of the members of the board of the Friends of Goethe, including Dennis Fredericks, Jurate Gulbinas, Margarete Preusser, Paul Lerner, Sydney Levine, and Catherine MacGowan, I would like thank you for your support.

# Sincerely,

# Nele Hempel-Lamer

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# LA PREMIERE | FAMILY MATINEE SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> @ 5:15 PM GOETHE-INSTITUT

# **MISSION ULJA FUNK**



Out in the endless expanses of space, the small asteroid VR-24-17-20 is speeding toward Earth. This event is neither dangerous nor extremely unusual. What is unusual is that VR-24-17-20 was discovered by 12-year-old aspiring astronomer Ulja Funk (Janinhoff). From her home in central Germany, Ulja has calculated the time and place of impact of VR 24-17-20. It will hit in less than four days in Pâtzschurk, Belarus. Failing to convince her family and the town of her remarkable discovery, Ulja takes matters into her own hands and recruits her 13-year-old classmate, Henk (Jonas Oeßel), for a road trip across Europe in a stolen hearse.

The unlikely duo has 20 hours to cross Germany and Poland and reach the impact site, but Ulja's conservative grandmother and her church community are quickly on the path to catch up with them. What follows is an off-beat, fast-paced chase, with colorful stops along the way, where the town's hypocrites are exposed, and divided families, friends, and nations are reunited. Winner of the 2023 German Film Award for Best Children's Film, Writer-Director Barbara Kronenberg's debut feature is a wild, slightly unorthodox ride that is fun for the whole family.



### Germany/Poland (2021) 91 min. German/Polish/Russian with English Subtitles

Writer-Director Barbara Kronenberg Cinematography Konstantin Kröning Cast Romy Lou Janinhoff, Jonas Oeßel, Hildegard Schroedter, Luc Feit, Anja Schneider, Ivan Shvedoff, Christina Große, Janina Elkin, Peter Trabner, Martina Eitner-Acheampong Producers Roshanak Behesht Nedjad Co-Producers Bernard Michaux, Joanna Szyma ska Production Company In Good Company GmbH, Samsa Film, Shipsboy.

# Awards

 German Film Award 2023: Best Children's Film. FBW 2021: Prädikat: besonders wertvoll
 Filmkunstmesse Leipzig 2021: Gilde Filmpreis,

- Best Children's Film.
- Filmfest München 2021: One-Future-Preis Honorable Mention

 Filmfest München - Kinderfilmfest 2021: Kinder-Medien-Prize "Der weiße Elefant", Best New Actor
 Deutsches Kinder Medien Festival Goldener Spatz 2021:

Goldener Spatz Award, Best feature Film

World Sales Picture Tree International picturetree-international.com



Barbara Kronenberg was born in Bochum, Gemany. She was a software developer before earning a bachelor's degree in media production and going on to study screenwriting and directing at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. Her graduation film, DIE BALLADE VON ELLA PLUMMHOFF, was screened at various international festivals, including FILMSCHOOLFEST MUNICH 2016. Kronenberg is an alumna of the Akademie für Kindermedien and of Serial Eyes, a European training program for television writers and producers. MISSION ULJA FUNK is her feature-film debut.

# **CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**



**FESTIVAL DIRECTOR** Birgit Ostermeier FESTIVAL PHOTOGRAPHY blueandkream.com

**FESTIVAL COORDINATOR** Daniel L. Chaffey

PUBLICIST Thomas Mikusz Chandler Poling White Bear PR

**EXECUTIVE TEAM** Simone Maier

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