

For Immediate Release

**2024 GERMAN CURRENTS FILM FESTIVAL:  
FULL PROGRAM LINE-UP**



**The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual German Currents Film Festival  
will take place  
Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>  
at the American Cinematheque (Egyptian Theatre & Los Feliz 3),  
the Goethe-Institut, and the Gardena Cinema  
and brings award-winning German film & premieres to Los Angeles**

*Los Angeles, Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 –*

*From Oct 11<sup>th</sup> through Oct 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, German Currents will take place at the American Cinematheque (Egyptian & Los Feliz 3 Theatres), the Gardena Cinema, and the Goethe-Institut space, rooted in the MacArthur Park neighborhood community. The Goethe-Institut, the German cultural center is a vibrant and a cutting-edge space for the arts. It is a vital center that connects people and builds a bridge between culture and communities through inclusive experiences, exhibits, concerts, screenings, and lively discussions.*

Festival Director and Director of the Goethe-Institut Los Angeles,  
Mrs. Luisa Rath-John says:

*“Film, unlike any other art form, has the power to connect us as human beings. It allows us to empathize with others and step into their shoes, to travel across borders, and even travel through time.*

*The films selected for the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of the German Currents film festival will give you the opportunity to delve into the tragic, yet beautifully romantic, last year of Franz Kafka’s life, question the concept of who or what is “normal,” and slip on the soccer shoes of 11-year-old Mona, a young girl from Syria, who experiences challenges as a refugee in Germany.*



*As the new director of the Goethe-Institut in Los Angeles, I am proud to present some of the best new German cinema to the audiences of Southern California. The German Currents team and I look forward to welcoming you to the festival and to the opportunity to meet and engage with you, our audience and share the transformative power of cinema with you all.*

German Currents 2024 will open with the exclusive red-carpet LA premiere of multi-award-winning writer-director Sonja Heiss' German box office and festival favorite, **WHEN WILL IT BE AGAIN LIKE IT NEVER WAS BEFORE**, based on the best-selling novel of the same name by Joachim Meyerhoff and starring Devid Striesow (ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT, THE COUNTERFEITERS, AGE OF CANNIBALS). The premiere will be followed by a gala reception at the Egyptian Theatre.

The festival weekend continues with the US premiere of the popular short film showcase **NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2024**; the US premiere of director Sarah Neumann's feature-length film debut, BEYOND THE BLUE BORDER, depicting the absurdities of life under East German rule and starring Lena Urzendowsky (FRANKY FIVE STAR, Netflix's DARK, and HOW TO SELL DRUGS ONLINE (Fast)), and writer-director Fabian Stumm's relationship drama, BONES AND NAMES, all presented at the Goethe-Institut. At the American Cinematheque's Los Feliz 3 theater, German Currents will present the LA premiere of multi-award-winning cinematographer-director Judith Kaufmann and director Georg Maas' historical drama THE GLORY OF LIFE, capturing the final year and romance in the life of writer Franz Kafka, as well as US premiere of writer-director Asli Özarlan's ELBOW, based on the novel "Ellbogen" by Fatma Aydemir.

Completing the festival program, the annual German Currents children's matinee returns to the Goethe-Institut on Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, with a free LA Premiere screening of writer-director Soleen Yusef's winner of the German Film Award for best Youth and Children's Film, WINNERS, that will also be presented as a special invite-only educational screening for LA area schools on Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at the Gardena Cinema. A discussion with Soleen Yusef following both events.

In addition to the festival's film programming, the annual filmmaker brunch, presented in cooperation with the German Film Office and the Villa Aurora is planned to feature a conversation with Soleen Yusef. Yusef, whose directorial credits include HAUS OHNE DACH (2016), episodes of Amazon Prime's DEUTSCHLAND 89, and Disney+'s SAM – A SAXON, is one of GERMAN FILMS' 2024 *Face to Face with German Films* ambassadors.

The festival takes place at the following locations

**THE EGYPTIAN THEATRE: 6712 HOLLYWOOD BLVD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90028**

**LOS FELIZ 3: 1822 N Vermont Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90027**

**GOETHE-INSTITUT LOS ANGELES: 1901 West 7<sup>th</sup> St. Suite AB, Los Angeles, CA 90057**

**GARDENA CINEMA: 14948 Crenshaw Blvd, Gardena, CA 90249**

All public screenings are free-of-charge, reservation is required: [www.germancurrents.com](http://www.germancurrents.com)

For more information, please visit: [www.germancurrents.com](http://www.germancurrents.com)  
[www.facebook.com/germancurrents](https://www.facebook.com/germancurrents)



## GERMAN CURRENTS 2024 FESTIVAL LINE-UP:

### Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup> @ the Egyptian Theatre

7:00 PM Opening Night Remarks and Screening followed by gala reception

#### **OPENING NIGHT | LA PREMIERE**

#### **WHEN WILL IT BE AGAIN LIKE IT NEVER WAS BEFORE | WANN WIRD ES ENDLICH WIEDER SO, WIE ES NIE WAR**

*Dir. Sonja Heiss. Germany (2023) 114 min. DCP Projection. German with English subtitles*

For Josse Meyerhoff (Loup Moltzen/von Bülow/Rose), growing up is anything but typical. His family lives on the grounds of Germany's largest psychiatric hospital, where his father, Richard (Striesow), is the director, and the boundaries between the patients and the family's private lives are blurred. His mother, Iris (Tonke), ignores the signs of her crumbling marriage by painting Italian vistas and escaping into memories of her youth. The youngest of three boys, Josse is prone to emotional outbursts and sadness but often finds comfort and a sympathetic ear among the clinic's patients. As Josse grows from his childhood in the 1970s to adolescence, his first love, a taste of freedom abroad, tragic losses in the 1980s, and finally into adulthood and his return to his family in the 1990s, the search for a sense of belonging and a feeling of home travels with him.

Multi-award-winning writer-director Sonja Heiss and co-writer Lars Hubrich's skillful adaptation of Joachim Meyerhoff's best-selling autobiographical novel blends tragedy and comedy, coming to life through powerful performances by Tonka, Striesow, Geiger, and Loup Moltzen/von Bülow/Rose, who portray Josse throughout the years.

**Sonja Heiss** is a screenwriter, novelist, and director based in Berlin. Raised in Munich, where she attended the University of Television and Film Munich, her student films *KARMA COWBOY* and *CHRISTINA WITHOUT KAUFMANN* have received numerous awards at international festivals. Her debut feature film *HOTEL VERY WELCOME* premiered in the Perspektive Deutsches Kino section of the Berlinale, winning several prizes including the First Steps Award. Her second feature, *HEDI SCHNEIDER STECKT FEST* premiered in the Forum section of the Berlinale, winning several awards, including the Hessian Film Award. Her first book, a collection of short stories named "Das Glück geht aus," was published in 2011. Her critically acclaimed novel "Rimini" was released in 2017 and made it onto the Spiegel bestseller list. She is an alumna of the Villa Aurora (2011).

#### **AWARDS & NOMINATIONS:**

**German Film Award 2023:** Nominated for Best Feature Film, Best Director

**Günter Rohrbach Filmpreis 2023:** Preis des Oberbürgermeisters, Best Performance – Laura Tonke

### Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> @ Goethe-Institut

1:30 PM Screening of



## US PREMIERE | SHORT FILM SHOWCASE @ GOETHE-INSTITUT

### NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2024 – Short Film Showcase

Germany (2024) 97 min. Various Languages with English Subtitles

Presented by German Films and the German Federal Film Board (FFA), the 14th edition of this beloved annual showcase presents the year's most promising young directors and outstanding student short films to international audiences and the film industry. The program combines new talents – the NEXT GENERATION of German Cinema – together with the best German shorts under 7 minutes – the winners of the FFA's SHORT TIGER Award 2024.

The 11 short films for NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2024 were selected by an expert jury: director Sophie Linnenbaum (THE ORDINARIES), Alexandra Gramatke (Kurzfilm Agentur Hamburg), and Dr. Christian Bräuer (Yorck Cinemas, CICAÉ). They had to choose from 98 submissions from 19 German film schools and 18 additional shorts (up to 15 min) by independent producers that were preselected by members 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.

#### Program:

**THE BARD'S CURSE | DES SÄNGERS FLUCH** *Scarlett Unverricht (Animation, 2023, 7 min.)*

**BLACK YOUTH** *Isaac Martínez (Fiction, 2023, 4 min.)*

**DON'T LET GO | LASS NICHT LOS** *Antonia Lindner (Fiction, 2024, 14 min.)*

**ENJOY YOUR MEAL** *Sofie Kienzle, Christian Manzke (Animation, 2023, 3 min.)*

**GOOD FOR ME** *Hannah Wolny (Fiction, 2023, 15 min.)*

**THE HIDDEN DIMENSION** *Ben Galster (Documentary, 2023, 5 min.)*

**I MAY ALWAYS ASK HER ANYTHING | ICH DARF SIE IMMER ALLES FRAGEN** *Silke Schönfeld (Documentary, 2023, 15 min.)*

**IT'S JUST A WHOLE** *Bianca Scali (Animation, 2023, 11 min.)*

**SENSITIVE CONTENT** *Narges Kalhor (Experimental, 2023, 9 min.)*

**SUPERBUHEI** *Josef Brandl (Fiction, 2023, 7 min.)*

**WEEDING | KASSIEREN** *Amelie Vierbuchen, Franca Pape, Lea Sprenger (Documentary, 2023, 9 min.)*

## Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> @ Los Feliz 3

7:00 PM Screening of

**LA PREMIERE @ LOS FELIZ 3**

**THE GLORY OF LIFE | DIE HERRLICHKEIT DES LEBENS**

*Dir. Judith Kaufmann, Georg Maas. Germany (2024) 98 min. DCP Projection. German/English with English Subtitles*

Summer, 1923. The Baltic Sea. The writer Franz Kafka (Tambrea), seriously ill with tuberculosis, convalesces at a seaside resort in Müritz. By chance, he meets the 25-year-old Dora Diamant (Confurius) on the beach, a governess from the Jewish Volksheim Berlin. Though they seem from different worlds, it is love at first sight, and for Kafka, Diamant embodies the essence of life. As their love grows, Kafka follows Diamant to Berlin. When his condition worsens, the lovers leave Berlin for a sanatorium near Vienna, where, in Diamant's arms, Kafka succumbs to his illness barely a year after they meet. Adapted by Gutmann and Writer-Director Maas from Michael Kumpfmüller's best-selling novel of the same name

and exquisitely lensed by multi-award-winning cinematography and co-director Judith Kaufmann, THE GLORY OF LIFE blends fact and fiction to capture Kafka's last love and year of life.

**AWARDS & NOMINATIONS:**

**German Film Award 2024:** Nominated for Best Costume Design, Best Director

**Festival des deutschen Films 2024:** Nominated for Rheingold Audience Award

**10 PM Screening of**

**US PREMIERE @ LOS FELIZ 3**

**ELBOW | ELLBOGEN**

*Dir. Asli Özarslan. Germany (2024) 86 min. DCP Projection. German/English/Turkish with English Subtitles*

17-year-old Hazel is a Turkish-German teen living in Berlin. Her biggest dream: to be given a chance at a future outside of her parents' bakery. Despite her best efforts to find an apprenticeship, her mediocre grades and numerous rejected applications leave her with few options. For her 18th birthday she wants to escape the everyday grind and hit the clubs with her friends. But the night's celebration is cut short after the girls are turned away by a bouncer at a dance club. When the teens are harassed in the subway on their way home, the situation escalates and Hazel's frustration about her rejections erupts into a fatal incident. Forced to flee to Turkey, a country she hardly knows, Hazel must survive at all costs. Based on the award-winning-novel "Ellbogen" by Fatma Aydemir, Özarslan's debut feature is a skillfully crafted and intense portrait of a young woman struggling to hold her ground in a society that seems to cast her aside.

**AWARDS & NOMINATIONS:**

**Hessischer Film- und Kinopreis 2024:** Frankfurter Buchmesse Award - Best Adaption

**Goldener Spatz 2024:** Audience Award, Best Youth Film

**Internationales Frauen Film Fest Dortmund+Köln 2024:** Best Debut Director, Best Debut Feature

**Lichter Filmfest 2024:** Best Regional Feature

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> @ GOETHE-INSTITUT**

**11:00 AM Screening followed by discussion with Soleen Yusef**

**US PREMIERE @ GOETHE-INSTITUT | IN PERSON – WRITER-DIRECTOR SOLEEN YUSEF**

**WINNERS | SIEGER SEIN**

*Dir. Soleen Yusef, Germany (2024) 119 min. DCP Projection. German/English with English Subtitles*

The first day at a new school can be tough for any kid, but for 11-year-old Mona it's downright chaotic. She and her Kurdish family have fled their home in Syria and ended up in Germany in search of a better life, but Mona is having a hard time fitting in. She's still learning German and misses her hometown and playing soccer with her friends. Chaos is the order of the day at her new school, where most of the teachers are worn to a frazzle and the students are just as frustrated with their teachers. When Mr. Che, the coach of the girls' soccer team sees Mona's soccer skills, he puts her on the team. Although they are training for an upcoming tournament for all of Berlin's schools, the team is anything but harmonious.

Mona is singled-out and is blamed for the team's troubles. With the tournament quickly approaching, they realize that if they want to win, they must stop fighting, treat each other as equals, and learn the true meaning of teamwork. Winner of the 2024 German Film Award for Best Children's Film, Yusuf's second feature is an inspirational, fast-paced coming-of-age film with a fresh, young perspective on the importance of family, friendship, and belonging.

**Soleen Yusef** was born in Duhok in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in 1987. At the age of nine she and her family fled to Berlin, Germany due to the political tensions in her home country. She graduated from high school in Berlin and later attended the Academy of Stage Arts, where she trained as a singer and an actress, and worked as an assistant in production, directing, and distribution at mítos film. In 2008, she began studying fiction directing at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. Her third-year film TRATTORIA premiered at the 2012 Berlinale. Since making her debut feature film HAUS OHNE DACH (2016), for which she won awards including the First Steps Award, she has been working on international productions for Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+. Soleen Yusef is one of GERMAN FILMS' 2024 Face to Face with German Films ambassadors.

#### **AWARDS & NOMINATIONS:**

**German Film Award 2024:** Best Children's Film

**Giffoni Film Festival Best Film Elements +10**

**FBW 2024:** Seal of Approval: Highly Recommended

**Deutsches Kinder Medien Festival Goldener Spatz 2024:** Best Screenplay

**3 PM Screening of**

**US PREMIERE @ GOETHE-INSTITUT**

#### **BEYOND THE BLUE BORDER | JENSEITS DER BLAUEN GRENZE**

*Dir. Sarah Neumann. Germany (2024) 102 min. Digital Projection. German/English with English Subtitles*

August 1989, East Germany. Hanna (Urzendowsky) is a talented swimmer who dreams of becoming an Olympic champion. When not training, she's with her best friends Andreas (Geitmann) and Jens (Veihelmann). Andreas comes from an abusive home and has never fit into the rigid GDR system. When Hanna and Jens learn that Andreas is to be "socialistically re-educated" in a youth work camp, they know they must help him. Andreas sees only one way out: to swim 50 km west, across the Baltic Sea to freedom. But in a society that demands conformity, Hannah's friendship with Andreas threatens her Olympic dreams. Suddenly, she is faced with the decision of her life: does she leave her secure place in socialist society, or let Andreas swim alone, knowing that he will never make it without her help? Neumann's multi-award-winning debut feature, based on Dorit Linke's novel, "Jenseits der blauen Grenze," looks to Germany's recent past to explore timeless themes of self-sacrifice, friendship, and the search for freedom.

#### **AWARDS & NOMINATIONS:**

**Filmfest Bremen 2024:** Audience Award, Best Regional Film

**Max Ophüls Preis 2024:** Best Young Actor, Audience Award - Feature Film, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury

**5:30 PM Screening of**

**US PREMIERE @ GOETHE-INSTITUT**



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Los Angeles



## **BONES AND NAMES | KNOCHEN UND NAMEN**

*Dir. Fabian Stumm. Germany (2023) 104 min. Digital Projection. German/French with English Subtitles*

Boris (Stumm) is an actor. Jonathan (Berger) is a writer. Together, they are a couple, but their relationship has reached a point of routine domesticity that some might call comforting, but others stagnant. As he immerses himself deeper into rehearsals for a new film with an unpredictable director, Boris begins to confuse real and fictional characters; meanwhile, Jonathan tries to redefine his voice as a writer by any means necessary. During these days spent struggling with emotional distance and closeness, trust, desire, and fear of loss, Boris' niece Josie flits about like Shakespeare's Puck, testing her boundaries as she navigates the approaching end of her childhood.

Stumm's directorial and screenplay feature-length debut unfolds in humorous, yet tender sequences centered on people searching for their place in life and offers an intimate reflection on the dissonances in relationships that connect and distance us.

### **AWARDS & NOMINATIONS:**

**Deutscher Schauspielpreis 2023:** Best Dramatic Supporting Role

**Neiße Filmfestival 2023:** Neiße-Fisch, Best Screenplay

**IFF Berlin 2023:** Heiner-Carow-Preis

### **About the Goethe-Institut Los Angeles:**

The Goethe-Institut is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany with a global reach. The institute promotes knowledge of the German-language abroad and fosters international cultural cooperation. The Goethe-Institut Los Angeles operates on a partnership basis. For individual projects, as for longer-term joint ventures, the Goethe-Institut connects with stakeholders in the cultural scene – institutions, organizations, companies, people in and from Southern California and Arizona, Germany, and other countries.

For more information, please visit: [www.goethe.de/losangeles](http://www.goethe.de/losangeles)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/goetheinstitut.losangeles](https://www.facebook.com/goetheinstitut.losangeles),

Twitter: @gi\_losangeles, and Instagram: @goetheinstitut\_losangeles

### **About the American Cinematheque:**

The American Cinematheque is a non-profit cultural organization whose mission is to celebrate the experience of cinema as a moving art form; we create spaces where both the public and members of the film industry come together as a community with the common language and love of film. Since it began screening films to the public in 1985, the American Cinematheque has provided diverse film programming and live in-person discussions and events with thousands of filmmakers and luminaries, presenting both new and repertory cinema to Los Angeles.

For more information, visit [www.americancinematheque.com](http://www.americancinematheque.com)

For more information, images, film stills, and interview requests:

White Bear PR, Thomas Mikusz, [thomas@whitebearpr.com](mailto:thomas@whitebearpr.com)

*The German Currents Film Festival is produced by the [Goethe-Institut Los Angeles](#) and the [American Cinematheque](#) in kind cooperation with the [German Consulate General](#), and with the generous support of [Condor](#), [The Friends of Goethe](#), [ELMA](#), and the [German Film Office](#).*

