



PRESS RELEASE

Film|Neu Presents the Latest Films from Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Festival Opens with award-winning Cold War drama *West*

October 10-16, 2014

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

**Goethe-Institut Washington
812 7th St. NW
Washington, DC 20001**

www.filmneu.org

Download Dropbox images [here](#).

(Washington, September 26, 2014)– From the Swiss Alps to South Tyrol, Cairo's Tahrir Square to Saint Petersburg's National Library of Russia—as well as various regions of Germany—the 22nd annual edition of Film|Neu, Washington's long-running festival of new films from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, tells stories of life and love, fairytales and frolics, urgent political crises and the toll of war.



Running Friday, October 10 through Thursday, October 16 at the E Street Cinema, this year's festival will open with the Washington premiere of director Christian Schwochow's acclaimed period drama *West*, featuring a powerful leading performance from Jordis Triebel that won her the Best Actress prize at the Montreal festival. Schwochow and actor Jacky Ido (who also appeared in *Inglorious Basterds*) will take part in a

discussion following the first screening. German filmmaker Marco Wilms will be present to discuss his documentary *Art War*, Swiss writer-director Petra Volpe will be on hand to present her award-winning drama *Dreamland*, and the program will close with *Beloved Sisters*, a romantic drama involving poet Friedrich Schiller from veteran director Dominik Graf. Seven additional films will round out this exciting festival slate, accompanied by discussions and parties with festival guests.

Film|Neu is a project of Goethe-Institut Washington, the Austrian Cultural Forum, and the Embassy of Switzerland, and is co-curated by Eddie Cockrell, who wrote the film notes. A Washington native and freelance film critic for the trade paper *Variety*, Cockrell is currently the program director of the social justice film event The Big Picture Film Festival in Sydney, Australia.

Film|Neu Schedule:

Opening Night:

Friday, October 10, 7 and 9:30 pm

West (Westen)

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Discussion with actor Jacky Ido (in person) and filmmaker Christian Schwochow (via Skype) and opening Berliner Party with DJ (at the Goethe-Institut) follows the first screening.

Germany, 2013, color, 102 minutes, German, English, Russian, Polish with English subtitles

Director: Christian Schwochow Screenplay: Heide Schwochow Producers: Katrin Schlösser, Thomas Kufus, Christoph Friedel With: Jördis Triebel, Tristan Göbel, Jacky Ido, Anja Antonowicz, Alexander Scheer Sales: Picture Tree International (Berlin, Germany)

In recent years, numerous German filmmakers have grappled with the schizophrenic nature of the divided Berlin of the Cold War. To these brave dramas can now be added director Christian Schwochow's award-winning *West*. Hoping for a better life East Berlin, widow and mother Nelly (Jordis Triebel) pretends to be married to a Westerner but ends up in the Marienfelde Refugee Centre. As events revolving around her uncertain status provoke increasingly paranoid reactions, Nelly begins to see her dream slip away. Triebel's riveting performance earned her the best actress prize at last year's Montreal festival, whilst Schwochow's strong direction confirms the promise of his early successes *November Child* and *Cracks In The Shell*.—Eddie Cockrell

Christian Schwochow (b. 1978, Bergen, GDR [now Germany]) worked as an author, reporter and video journalist before studying at the film academy in Baden-Württemberg. His films include *November Child* (2007), *Cracks In The Shell* (2011) and *Bornholmer Strasse* (2013).

At the Goethe-Institut Washington:

Saturday, October 11, 12 pm

Cathedrals of Culture (Kathedralen der Kultur)

3D Screening Sneak Preview!

Germany/Denmark/Austria/Norway, 2014, color, 165 min.

Directors: Wim Wenders, Michael Glawogger, Michael Madsen, Robert Redford, Margreth Olin, Karim Aïnouz Producers: Erwin M. Schmidt, Gian-Piero Ringel Sales: Cinephil (Tel Aviv, Israel)

Wim Wenders continues his fascination with the 3D format, first exhibited in the exhilarating 2011 dance documentary *Pina*, with this six-part series that examines a panoply of favorite architectural designs of a stimulating array of international directors. Wenders himself goes behind the scenes at the Berlin Philharmonic, followed by recently-deceased Austrian documentarian Michael Glawogger's exploration of the National Library of Russia. Danish director Michael Madsen tours Norway's distinctly humane Halden Prison, after which Robert Redford contemplates the Californian research facility Salk Institute. The final installments find Margreth Olin profiling the Oslo Opera House and Brazilian filmmaker Karim Aïnouz's look at Paris' legendary Centre Pompidou. *Cathedrals of Culture* is both intellectually stimulating and sublimely entertaining.—Eddie Cockrell



Wim Wenders (b. 1945, Düsseldorf, Germany) is currently working on his 3D feature film *Everything Will Be Fine*.

Michael Glawogger (b. 1959, Graz, Austria-d. 2014, Monrovia, Liberia) moved effortlessly between documentaries and fiction features. He succumbed to malaria during a year-long international shoot.

Michael Madsen (b. 1972, Copenhagen, Denmark) is a director and conceptual artist whose most recent documentary *Into Eternity* (2011) examines a nuclear waste facility.

Robert Redford (b. 1936, Santa Monica, California USA) is an actor and director most recently seen in *All Is Lost* (2013) and *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014).

Margreth Olin (b. 1970, Stranda, Norway) works in documentaries, features and theater. Her 2010 fiction film *The Angel* was Norway's official Oscar entry that year.

Karim Aïnouz (b. 1966, Fortaleza, Brazil) saw his latest film *Praia Do Futuro* premiere in competition at the 2014 Berlin International Film Festival.

Saturday, October 11, 1 pm

Monday, October 13, 9 pm

Love Steaks

Germany, 2013, color, 89 minutes, German with English subtitles

Director: Jakob Lass Screenplay: Lass, Ines Schiller, Timon Schäppi, Nico Woche

Producers: Schiller, Golo Schultz With: Lana Cooper, Franz Rogowski Sales:

Filmuniversität Babelsberg Konrad Wolf (Potsdam-Babelsberg, Germany)

Opposites attract, sort of, in this energetic comedy with darker streaks from director Jakob Lass. At a luxury German coastal hotel, shy apprentice massage therapist Clemens (Franz Rogowski) strikes up an unlikely but believable friendship with exuberant kitchen worker Lara (Lana Cooper), a closet alcoholic. The twist here is that Lass and company made the film in an actual hotel, and all the supporting players are actual employees. The finished film, a combination of planned sequences and improvisation, was distilled from some 80 hours of shot footage. Winner of awards at Sundance and Max Ophuls, and a surprise best film nominee at Germany's Oscars, the Lolas, *Love Steaks* is an innovative and original approach to dramatic methodology and structure that could do for German cinema what *Dogme 95* did for the Danish industry.—Eddie Cockrell

Jakob Lass (b. 1981, Bavaria, Germany) trained as an actor and has been studying film directing at the Konrad Wolf University of Film and Television in Babelsberg.

Following five short films, he made his feature debut with *Frontal Watte* in 2011.

Saturday, October 11, 3 pm

Monday, October 13, 7 pm

Age of Cannibals (Zeit der Kannibalen)

Germany, 2013, color, 93 minutes, German with English subtitles

Director: Johannes Naber Screenplay: Stefan Weigl Producer: Milena Maitz With:

Sebastian Blomberg, Devid Striesow, Katharina Schuettler, Romesh Ranganthan, Steve Ellery, Jaymes Butler Sales: Studio.TV.Film (Berlin)



Dedicated to getting ahead in their firm, known only as “The Company,” ambitious business consultants Kai Niederländer (Sebastian Blomberg) and Frank Öllers (Devid Striesow) travel the world doing the conglomerate’s bidding and doing it ruthlessly well. When an unseen colleague is promoted to partner ahead of them and his replacement arrives in the form of the equally competitive Bianca Maerz (Katharina Schuettler), their already shaky alliance begins to crumble. Shot on a series of hotel room sets in Cologne, this German *Wolf Of Wall Street*—which even features a first-ever joke at the Goethe-Institut’s expense—is a dark comedy that finds humanity taking a back seat to capitalism and greed.—Eddie Cockrell

Johannes Naber (b. 1971, Baden-Baden, Germany) studied philosophy and film. He has been active in shorts work and documentaries since 1997. *Age of Cannibals* is his second dramatic feature following *The Albanian* (2010).

Saturday, October 11, 5 pm

Sunday, October 12, 9 pm

Thursday, October 16, 9:45 pm

Finsterworld

Germany, 2013, color, 91 minutes, German with English subtitles

Director: Frauke Finsterwalder Screenplay: Finsterwalder, Christian Kracht, from the novel by Kracht Producers: Tobias Walker, Philipp Worm With: Johannes Krisch, Michael Maertens, Margit Carstensen, Sandra Hüller, Ronald Zehrfeld, Corinna Harfouch, Bernhard Schütz, Christoph Bach, Carla Juri, Loenard Scheicher, Jakub Gierszal, Max Pellny, Markus Hering, Dieter Meier Sales: Global Screen (Munich)

An impressive dramatic debut from documentary filmmaker Frauke Finsterwalder, *Finsterworld* pulls off the not inconsiderable feat of deftly adapting a multi-strand novel (her husband, author Christian Kracht, collaborated on the screenplay) into a dark fairytale of German identity and miscommunication. A pedicurist (Michael Maertens) is stopped by an affable cop, whose girlfriend (Sandra Hüller) is a documentary filmmaker in crisis. The pedicurist’s best client (Margit Carstensen) has a grandson (Jakub Gierszal) who bullies his classmates during a field trip to a concentration camp, and so on. *Finsterworld* has obviously hit a nerve in Germany, where *Die Zeit* called it “a masterpiece.” There is pessimism here, but also hope, in Finsterwalder’s brave new world.—Eddie Cockrell

Frauke Finsterwalder (b. 1975, Hamburg, Germany) studied literature and history in Berlin, worked at the Maxim-Gorki-Theater and the Volksbühne, and was an editor at the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. She studied documentary film directing at the University of Television and Film Munich. *Finsterworld* is her feature film debut.

Saturday, October 11, 7:30 pm

Sunday, October 12, 12 pm

Not My Day (Nicht mein Tag)

Germany, 2014, color, 115 minutes, German with English subtitles



Director: Peter Thorwath Screenplay: Thorwath, Stefan Holtz, from the novel by Ralf Husmann Producers: Christian Becker, Marcus Machura With: Moritz Bleibtreu, Axel Stein, Jasmin Great, Anna Maria Mühe, Nele Kiper, Ralf Richter Sales: Westside Film Production (Krefeld, Germany)

An action-packed German buddy comedy and road movie that has taken the domestic box office by storm this year, *Not My Day* stars Axel Stein as frustrated small-town bank officer Till, whose life becomes far more interesting when he's kidnapped by long-haired ex-con Nappo (Moritz Bleibtreu) and forced to be his getaway driver after he's robbed Till's bank. But since the meek clerk's marriage is in the doldrums anyway, he decides to pair up with Nappo for a job in Amsterdam and discovers his inner miscreant along the way. There's much more to the caper than this, but the kinetic joy of *Not My Day* is the skillful way director Peter Thorwath has navigated the twists and turns of the source novel. As *Not My Day* proves, German cinema can keep up with Hollywood just fine.—Eddie Cockrell

Peter Thorwath (cb. 1971, Dortmund, Germany) studied graphic design and film at the University of Film & Television in Munich. His films include *Bang Boom Bang* (1999), *If It Don't Fit, Use A Bigger Hammer* (2002) and *Goldene Zeiten* (2006).

Saturday, October 11, 9:45 pm

Sunday, October 12, 6:30 pm

The Dark Valley (Das finstere Tal)

Austria/Germany, 2014, color, widescreen, 115 minutes, German, English with English subtitles

Director/Editor: Andreas Prochaska Screenplay: Martin Ambrosch, Prochaska, from the novel by Thomas Willmann Producers: Helmut Grasser, Stefan Arndt With: Sam Riley, Paula Beer, Tobias Moretti, Clemens Schick, Helmuth A. Häusler, Martin Leutgeb Sales: Films Distribution (Paris, France)

Co-producer Stefan Arndt (*Run, Lola, Run*) has referenced both *Once Upon a Time in the West* and *The White Ribbon* to describe director Andreas Prochaska's widescreen Alpine Heimat western *The Dark Valley*, and he's right on the money. When the taciturn German-speaking American photographer Greider (Sam Riley, *Control*) arrives unannounced in a remote and insulated village, he rouses the suspicions of the sinisterly tight-knit community. Inevitably, Greider's presence serves a purpose that involves revenge and, hopefully, redemption. Chock full of familiar western tropes presented through the prism of mysterious local customs in an exotic location, *The Dark Valley* is a somber, rewarding genre triumph.—Eddie Cockrell

Andreas Prochaska (b. 1964, Vienna, Austria) began with odd jobs in the film industry prior to working on Michael Haneke's *The Castle* and *Funny Games*. His films include the Austrian box office smashes *Dead in 3 Days* (2006) and *The Unintentional Kidnapping of Mrs. Elfriede Ott* (2010), the latter of which also won numerous awards.

Sunday, October 12, 2 and 4:15 pm

Art War



Discussion with director Marco Wilms follows both screenings.

Germany, 2013, color, 93 minutes, Arabic, English, German with English subtitles

Writer/Director/Co-Producer/Cinematographer: Marco Wilms With: Ammar Abo Bakr, Ganzeer, Hamed Abdel-Samard, Ramy Essam, Alaa Awad, Mohammed Khaled, Abdo El Amir Sales: Heldenfilm (Berlin)

“Revolutions are history’s engines,” someone says during the course of *Art War*, an inspiring new documentary about the vigorous and passionate efforts of Egyptian artists, writers, musicians and performers to keep the spirit of the Arab Spring alive. Filmed over the two-year period of 2011-13, the film profiles graphic designer Ganzeer, large-scale muralist Ammar, writer and radical militant anti-Islamist Hamed and outrageous chanteuse Bosaina. They’re not the only ones filmmaker Marco Wilms talks to, but their tenacity and commitment lead them, and audiences, on a sometimes harrowing, always inspiring creative journey. –Eddie Cockrell

Marco Wilms (b. 1966, East Berlin, Germany) studied stage design and art direction prior to directing music videos and completing his studies at HFF Potsdam-Babelsberg. Other films include *Tailor-Made Dreams* (2005) and *Comrade Couture* (2009). He has also produced and directed TV programs and series for international broadcasters. He is the head of Heldenfilm.

Tuesday, October 14, 7 and 9:15 pm

The Silent Mountain (Der stille Berg)

Reception with Austrian treats takes place between the two screenings.

Austria/Italy/USA, 2014, color, 100 minutes, German with English subtitles

Director: Ernst Gossner Screenplay: Clemens Aufderklamm Producers: Heinz Stussak, Gossner With: William Moseley, Claudia Cardinale, Fritz Karl, Eugenia Costantini, Michael Cadeddu, Harald Windisch Sales: Premiere Entertainment Group (Encino, California)

On May 23, 1915, Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary. The mountain-top theater of war, in the territories of what are now Trentino and South Tyrol, quickly degenerated into cold and muddy trench warfare. In 2011, Tyrolian-born filmmaker Ernst Gossner made the documentary *Global Warning* about this conflict. Now, working on a much larger canvas, his wide-screen romantic adventure *The Silent Mountain* stars William Moseley (the Narnia trilogy) as a young Tyrol taken from his new Italian love (Francesca Calzolari) and dropped into this horrible conflict. A sweeping condemnation of war set against a timeless love story, *The Silent Mountain* is both rugged and romantic. –Eddie Cockrell

Ernst Gossner (b. Tyrol, Austria) began acting at 15 and in 1999 was accepted to the directing program at the American Film Institute Conservatory in Los Angeles. His first feature film, 2007’s *South of Pico*, has won awards at numerous festivals.

Wednesday, October 15, 6:30 and 9 pm



Dreamland (Traumland)

Discussion with director Petra Volpe and cinematographer Judith Kaufmann follows both screenings. Reception with Swiss treats takes place between the two screenings.

Switzerland/Germany, 2013, color, 98 minutes, Swiss-German, German with English subtitles

Director/Screenplay: Petra Volpe Producers: Lukas Hobi, Reto Schaerli, Stefan Schubert, Yildiz Özcan With: Luna Mijovic, André Jung, Ursina Lardi, Bettina Stucky, Devid Striesow, Stefan Kurt, Marisa Paredes Sales: Picture Tree International (Berlin)

Zurich on a snowy Christmas Eve looks like a winter wonderland. Yet for the four families whose lives have or will intersect with the Eastern European prostitute Mia (Luna Mijovic), nothing will ever be the same. Lena (Ursina Lardi) discovers her husband (Devid Striesow) is being unfaithful, while social worker Judith (Bettina Stucky) has her own demons. Recovering alcoholic Rolf (André Jung) is lonely, as is Maria (Marisa Paredes). Winner of the Swiss Film Award Best Actress prize for Lardi (*The White Ribbon*), Petra Volpe's powerful, uncompromising *Dreamland* is boldly played by an extraordinary ensemble cast.—Eddie Cockrell

Petra Volpe (b. 1970, Suhr, Switzerland) studied art, editing, drama and screenwriting in the 1990s before establishing herself as an independent writer and director in 2001. Her films include *Beautiful Weekend (Schönes Wochenende, 2006)*, *Small Fry (Kleine Fische, 2007)*, *Spring in Autumn (Frühling im Herbst, 2009)*, and the screenplay for Bettina Oberli's *Lovely Louise* (2013).

Closing Night:

Thursday, October 16, 6 pm

Beloved Sisters (Die geliebten Schwestern)

Discussion with Peter Pfeiffer (Professor, Program in Film and Media Studies, Georgetown University) follows the screening.

Germany, 2014, color, 170 min., German

Director/Screenplay: Dominik Graf Producer: Uschi Reich With: Hannah Herzsprung, Florian Stetter, Henriette Confurius, Claudia Messner, Anne Schäfer Sales: Global Screen (Munich, Germany), US Sales: Music Box Films

During the latter half of the 19th century, it is speculated that writer and philosopher Friedrich Schiller conducted simultaneous intimate relationships with sisters Charlotte von Lengefeld (whom he would marry) and Caroline von Beulwitz, who remained trapped in a loveless marriage of her own. Now, for his follow-up to the extraordinary *Dreileben: Don't Follow Me Around*, film and television veteran Dominik Graf has made a very different but no less satisfying period drama about distance, yearning and the vicissitudes of love. From the passionate performances of the three leads to Claus Jurgen Pfeiffer's magnificent production design, *Beloved Sisters* promises a memorable conclusion to this year's program.—Eddie Cockrell



Dominik Graf (b. 1952, Munich, Germany) studied German and Musical Sciences before enrolling at the University of Television & Film in Munich. His graduation film *Der kostbare Gast* won the Bavarian Film Award in 1979 and he's been moving effortlessly between TV and feature work ever since. His films include *Die Katze* (1987), *A Map of the Heart* (2001), *The Red Cockatoo* (2005) and *Dreileben: Don't Follow Me Around*.

Tickets:

\$11.50, \$9.50 for Students and Friends of the Goethe-Institut, \$8.50 for Seniors

Opening Night 7 pm Screening followed by "Berlin" Party with DJ at Goethe-Institut: \$26.50

Closing Night 6 pm Screening and "Urban Europe" Party: \$16.50

Featuring complimentary beer from Gordon Biersch, German wine, and food provided by the Embassy of Switzerland, German Gourmet, Old Europe Restaurant, Cafe Mozart, Heidelberg Pastry Shoppe, and Whole Foods Market.

For information call 202-783-9494 or visit www.landmarktheatres.com.

Co-presented by the Goethe-Institut in Washington, the Austrian Embassy and the Embassy of Switzerland, with support from German films and Friends of the Goethe-Institut.

More: www.filmneu.org

About the Goethe-Institut Washington:

On behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany, cultural institutes around the world provide cultural programs, language courses, support to educators, and up-to-date information on Germany in the context of Europe. Founded in 1990, Goethe-Institut Washington, DC is a center for German culture and language in the midst of the revitalized Downtown.

www.goethe.de/washington

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