

goEast →

7th FESTIVAL OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN FILM
WIESBADEN, GERMANY 28.03. TO 03.04.2007

Press Release

Frankfurt / Wiesbaden, March 2007

Colourful, bizarre, precise: cinema from Eastern Europe

goEast presents: Competition brimming with premieres / Films from talented newcomers and past masters / Distinguished jury with Lucian Pintilie and Franziska Petri / 40 shorts in Students' Competition / First German screening of THE ISLAND

goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film begins **at 19.00 on Wednesday, 28 March** with the **ceremonial opening** by Udo Corts, Hessen State Minister of Higher Education, Research and the Arts, and Rita Thies, Head of the Wiesbaden Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, at the Caligari cinema in Wiesbaden. A programme of short films will launch the festival.

With **one world premiere**, two international premieres, and a large number of first German screenings, the goEast audience can look forward to a highly exciting **Competition**. Among the ten features and six documentaries selected for competition are several debut films, such as *FRISS LEVEGŐ / FRESH AIR*, the colourful Gesamtkunstwerk by Hungarian director Ágnes Kocsis, and *EUFORIA / EUPHORIA* by Ivan Vyrpaev, a Russian director so far noted for his work in the theatre. After its success in Estonia the comedy *JAN UUSPÖLD LÄHEB TARTUSSE / 186 KILOMETRES* by Andres Maimik and Rain Tolk is receiving its international premiere at goEast. With *ARMIN* (dir: Ognjen Sviličić) and *KLOPKA / THE TRAP* (dir: Srđan Golubović), two competition films from ex-Yugoslavia testify to the emergence of a new generation of directors who deliver precise societal descriptions far removed from the hackneyed Balkan clichés. In the fast-paced *KLJNIEKS / THE HOSTAGE*, Laila Pakalniņa effortlessly deconstructs both the thriller genre and a number of sacred national institutions. For barbed allusions to society, the legal system and politicians, that film is matched only by the equally bizarre Russian film *IZOBRAŽAJA ŽERTVU / PLAYING THE VICTIM* (dir: Kirill Serebrennikov). With *HEZKÉ CHVILKY BEZ ZÁRUKY / PLEASANT MOMENTS*, the goEast Competition features the latest film from the masterly Věra Chytilová, who radically altered the aesthetic direction of Czech cinema during the Prague Spring together with colleagues like Miloš Forman and Jiří Menzel, and has retained her critical eye in a transformed society. The same is true of the highly awarded Polish documentary filmmaker Marcel Łoziński, who together with Krzysztof Kieślowski altered the face of Polish documentary filmmaking in the late 1960s and in *JAK TO SIĘ ROBI / HOW TO DO IT* scrutinizes an experiment conducted by the political adviser Piotr Tymochowicz. The competing documentaries also include a world premiere, namely that of *ROSSOSH...RAGTIME...* (dir: Pulat Ahmatov), a depiction of the everyday life of two young Russian women in a small frontier town. Forman's *HORÍ, MÁ PANENKO / THE FIREMEN'S BALL*, which is showing in the Homage section, served as inspiration for *SEJDEME SE V EUROCAMPU / I GUESS WE'LL MEET IN THE EUROCAMP*, a documentary by young Czech director Erika Hříková.

The festival prize money totalling 29,500 euros will be distributed according to the choices made by the distinguished members of the **international goEast jury**, which is chaired by **Lucian Pintilie**, one of Romania's most famous directors. Barred from making films in his homeland, he lived in Paris from 1973 to 1990. The films he made after his return from exile count among the most important works of

contemporary Romanian cinema: *BALANȚA / THE OAK* (Romania/France, 1992) or *TERTIUM NON DATUR* (Romania/France, 2005) among many others. Both works are screening in the **goEast** Specials section. Another juror is the actress **Franziska Petri**, who came to notice with her lead roles in Vanessa Jopps *VERGISS AMERIKA / FORGET AMERICA* (Germany, 2000) and Joseph Vilsmaier's *LEO UND CLAIRE* (Germany, 2001) as well as her many appearances on television. She recently completed *DAS HERZ IST EIN DUNKLER WALD* by Nicolette Kriebitz, in which she plays alongside Nina Hoss and Otto Sander. Further members of the jury are the British producer **Keith Griffiths**, the Serbian film critic **Borislav Andjelić**, and the Croatian director **Ivona Juka**, who won the Documentary Award of the Hertie Foundation with her film *FACING THE DAY* at **goEast** in 2006. The jury presents the **Škoda Award for Best Film** – the “Golden Lily” worth 10,000 euros – and the **City of Wiesbaden Award for Best Director**, which brings the prize winner 7,500 euros, as well as the **Documentary Award of the Hertie Foundation**, which bestows 10,000 euros on the documentary film which most impressively outlines the ongoing transformation process in central and eastern Europe. The Non-Profit Hertie Foundation has been the main private sponsor of **goEast** since the festival was launched. The **Federal Foreign Office** donates a prize endowed with the sum of 2,000 euros and explicitly honouring “artistic originality which creates cultural diversity”. An independent film critics' jury awards the **FIPRESCI Prize**. Thanks to the special assistance of the Hessen State Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts, all competing films screening at the Caligari cinema (17.30 or 18.00 and 20.00) will have additional **German subtitles** for the first time.

The “second” competitive slot is the **Students' Competition** traditionally sponsored by the BHF-Bank Foundation. The section enjoys special popularity with the **goEast** audience, whose votes decide who wins the prizes amounting to 3,000 euros. Forty films, among them two world premieres, are showing in the three categories (Documentary and Experimental Film, Museum Wiesbaden, Thurs. 29.03, 20.00; Animated Film, Fri. 30.03, 20.00; Short Films, Caligari FilmBühne, Fri. 30.03, 22.00). In 2007, **goEast** has issued an invitation to film students from Tirana, Tallin, Dessau, the Rhine-Main region, and Kassel. Winners are notified immediately after the screening of the third programme, and the prizes are presented during the festival closing ceremony together with the **BHF-Bank Foundation Promotional Prize** for the best film from a foreign film school. The latter prize, worth 1,500 euros, is awarded by a three-strong jury made up of Egon Bunne (University of Applied Sciences, Mainz), Andrzej Klamt (University of Applied Sciences, Wiesbaden), and Christine Kopf (Director of **goEast**).

The Robert Bosch Stiftung is likewise committed to encouraging young filmmakers and intercultural dialogue between Germany and Central and Eastern Europe. The “Promotional Prize for Joint Film Productions by Young German and Eastern/South Eastern European Filmmakers” of the Robert Bosch Stiftung offers young Germans working in the fields of production, directing, camera and screenwriting the opportunity to work on a joint film project with young partners from Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Every year, one animated film, one documentary and one short film are separately supported with up to 70,000 euros in funding. The prize is awarded in cooperation with the Filmbüro Baden-Württemberg and, as of 2007, the **goEast** Film Festival in Wiesbaden. Fifteen projects were pre-selected from the many submissions received in response to the call for entries in 2006, and the teams presented their projects to an independent jury of experts during the Filmschau Baden-Württemberg in December 2006. For the first time, the three promotional prizes will be presented at the **goEast** closing ceremony **at 19.00 on Tuesday, 3 April**, together with the awards for the prize-winning films emerging from the festival's Competition and Students' Competition.

Further festival highlights include the **goEast** Symposium dedicated to the subject “The Yearning for Spirituality – Film and Religion in Eastern Europe”. The accompanying film series includes films showing in Germany for the first time such as *OSTROV / THE ISLAND* by Pavel Lungin (Russia, 2006) and *POŁUDNIE-PÓŁNOC / SOUTH BY NORTH* by Łukasz Karwowski (Poland, 2007) as well as films by Aleksandr Sokurov (*VOSTOČNAJA ELEGIJA / EASTERN ELEGY*, Russia/Japan 1995, and *ŽERTVA VEČERNJAJA / THE EVENING SACRIFICE*, USSR, 1984-1987). German film star Katharina Thalbach appears in person at the Sunday Matinee screening of the film in which she plays a lead role: *STRAJK – DIE HELDIN VON DANZIG / STRIKE* (Germany/Poland, 2006), Volker

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Schlöndorff's historical drama about the Solidarność movement in Poland. The festival is also honoured by the presence of Albanian director Fatmir Koçi, whose work is being presented in the goEast Portrait section traditionally devoted to an artist whose career developed both in the Communist era and subsequent period. The 2007 goEast Homage is dedicated to Oscar-prizewinner Miloš Forman (AMADEUS, 1984), and shows his fascinating early output. Finally, the Signature section offers space to independent and original artistic approaches and includes the first German screening of what may safely be seen as the first Polish Western: SUMMER LOVE by Piotr Uklański.

Plenty is going on behind the scenes at goEast, too, for instance, a workshop bringing together experts from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNMI Kosovo, Croatia, Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, and Serbia in order to jointly analyze the documentary filmmaking situation in Southeast Europe. The **Southeast Europe Documentary Network**, a project initiated by goEast with support from the European Cultural Foundation and the Goethe-Institut, intends to develop strategies for independent, critical documentaries that do not shrink from tackling taboo issues, and to encourage inter-state projects. The workshop serves to prepare an online publication and a film series in 2008.

The goEast Film Festival is made possible through the generous support of the Hessian Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts, of the state capital Wiesbaden, the Non-Profit Hertie Foundation and the Robert Bosch Stiftung. Škoda Auto Deutschland, a partner of the festival since its inception, has strengthened its commitment to the festival this year and has also become a partner of the Deutsches Filminstitut – DIF.

Eight viewing terminals are available to journalists and accredited visitors for the duration of the festival (location: Wiesbadener Musikakademie, Friedrichstrasse 7, between Villa Clementine and Caligari FilmBühne). All of the films showing at goEast, and almost all the films submitted to the festival, can be viewed. The viewing room is open from 11.00 to 16.00 on 28.03., and from 10.00 to 20.00 on the remaining days of the festival. Reservations can be made on site; during the opening hours, two workstations with internet access are likewise available to journalists.

The goEast Catalogue contains detailed information in German and English on all competition films as well as biographical outlines of the directors. The oeuvre of **Fatmir Koçi** is presented in detail. Two essays approach the topic of the 2007 Symposium, namely the current preoccupation with religion and spirituality in Central and Eastern Europe, from respectively sociological and film-historical perspectives. Special programmes and other festival sections are briefly presented in German and English. The richly illustrated 140-page catalogue costs 4 euros, and is available from the cinema box offices and Festival Centre.

The complete programme of films and accompanying events can be found at www.filmfestival-goeast.de.

Festival-related press material and photographs can likewise be downloaded from the press section at www.filmfestival-goeast.de. Broadcast-ready materials (festival trailer, film excerpts) will be provided on DVD on request.

Press contact:

Jennifer Jones
Phone: +49 (0)69 / 961 220 655
E-mail: jones@filmfestival-goEast.de

Christiane Mathes (Assistenz)
Phone: +49 (0)69 / 961 220 658
E-mail: presse@filmfestival-goEast.de

Organizer:

Deutsches Filminstitut – DIF
Schaumainkai 41
60596 Frankfurt am Main

E-mail: info@filmfestival-goEast.de
Internet: www.filmfestival-goEast.de