

## Press Release

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## Look East!

**From March 28<sup>th</sup> to April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007: goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film in Wiesbaden / Symposium – “The Yearning for Spirituality: Film and Religion in Eastern Europe” / Homage to Milos Forman, wanderer between worlds / Portrait: Fatmir Koçi, chronicler of everyday Albania / Robert Bosch Stiftung presents highly endowed promotional prizes for the first time at goEast**

The seventh **goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film** represents a renewed opportunity to profile the multifaceted filmmaking landscape of Eastern Europe. Each of the more than 150 feature-length films and shorts from over 20 different countries selected by the festival organizers invites the viewer to discover the filmmaking traditions and current trends shaping the rich cinematic output of Central and Eastern Europe.

The **Competition** includes ten fiction films and six documentaries, many of them German and international premieres. An international jury will grant the Škoda Award, “The Golden Lily”, of 10,000 euros for Best Film together with the City of Wiesbaden’s Prize for Best Director, endowed with 7,500 euros. The jury will also select a film to receive the Documentary Award of 10,000 euros, donated by the Hertie Foundation, who has been the festival’s largest private supporter since its inception. This prize goes to the documentary which most impressively represents the ongoing process of transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. The list of competition prizes is rounded off with a distinction from the German Foreign Ministry, endowed with 2,000 euros.

**goEast** is organized by the German Film Institute – DIF. The festival is made possible primarily by the funding received from the Hessian Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts, and from the City of Wiesbaden, capital of the state of Hessen.

The aspect of encouraging young filmmakers is becoming increasingly accentuated in the **goEast** profile. The prizes bestowed by the BHF-BANK Foundation in the **goEast Film Student’s Competition** are reserved for film students in Central/Eastern Europe and Germany, with prize money of 3,000 euros being awarded within the Animation, Short Film, and Documentary/Experimental Film categories, as well as a promotional prize worth 1,500 euros for the best short film from a non-German film school. The **goEast Young Professionals Programme**, likewise, honours upcoming filmmakers, and, in 2007, will offer students from Tirana, Tallinn, Dessau, the Rhine-Main region and Kassel the chance to participate in a range of advanced workshops. Introduced in 2006, the programme was instantly met with an enthusiastic response.

The awarding of the Robert Bosch Stiftung’s Promotional Prizes for Joint Film Productions by Young Germans and Eastern/Southeastern European Filmmakers at **goEast** this year, amounts to an off-screen premiere and underscores the festival’s efforts to assist emerging talents. The promotional programme supports the work of young filmmakers making their first films in international teams, which are eligible for a share of the maximum sum of 210,000 euros. From this year onward, the prize winners will be announced annually at **goEast**.

Given the generally increased significance of religion, the 2007 **goEast Symposium**, which will take place from March 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>, plans to address the conflicts between different religions and the attempt to understand them. With the title “**The Yearning for Spirituality – Film and Religion in Eastern Europe**”, under the now traditional direction of Hans-Joachim Schlegel, the symposium proposes to discuss Eastern Europe’s religious diversity as a source of cultural wealth and potential conflict, and to examine how this situation is

reflected in film. A focus will lie both on the inter-religious conflict of cinematic images as well as on the way the spiritual dimension has crucially influenced the language of film in Eastern Europe.

The interdisciplinary debate among theologians, film theorists and Eastern Europe experts from Germany, Russia, Poland and Georgia will be accompanied by an extensive series of screenings offering both contemporary productions and startling film-historical perspectives. Screening at **goEast** for the first time are new prints of Tarkovsky's classic *ANDREJ RUBLJOV / ANDREI RUBLYOV* (USSR, 1969) and of the reconstructed version of Eisenstein's *BEZHIN LUG / BEZHIN MEADOW* (USSR, 1937).

**goEast** marks the 75th birthday of the several-time Oscar-winner, **Milos Forman**, with an **Homage**. Forman, who emigrated from Czechoslovakia to the United States in 1968 had a crucial formative influence on the New Wave of Czechoslovakian cinema in the 1960s. In Hollywood, the filmmaker proceeded to shoot major successes like *ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST* (USA, 1975) or *AMADEUS* (USA, 1984). **goEast** has programmed screenings of the director's rarely shown early work: the pre-emigration films and his first American production.

The **Portrait** section will present the first German survey of the work of Albanian filmmaker **Fatmir Koçi**. This chronicler of a country about which Westerners know very little, attracted international attention with *TIRANA VITI ZERO / TIRANA, YEAR ZERO* (France/Albania, 2001) at the Venice Festival in 2001. The **goEast** presentation includes his entire oeuvre to date by this contemporary director who employs highly distinctive formal devices in his search for his country's reality and identity.

Lending the festival its special atmosphere is the very popular **goEast** side-programme, which guarantees to deliver cultural gems from Central and Eastern Europe. Details of the literary and musical highlights awaiting festival visitors in Wiesbaden will be communicated soon.

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