



Press Release

World Cinema Fund: It's All about Cooperation

On February 11, 2009, *WCF* Day will once again provide an opportunity to learn more about the programme, successes, funding strategies, films, initiatives, and partners of the *World Cinema Fund (WCF)*.

On this same day, *WCF* directors and producers, as well as international representatives of the film branch and the press are invited to attend a panel discussion. Under the heading "Cinema in Palestine", a public debate on the topic of cinema in the Palestinian autonomous territories will be held with film experts from the region. The event is supported by the Federal Foreign Office and the Goethe Institute.

In the last years, many of the most important and successful film productions from the Middle East have borne the signatures of Palestinian filmmakers, for example, of Elia Suleiman (*Divine Intervention, Chronicle of a Disappearance*) or Hany Abu Hassad (*Paradise Now*). The famous Palestinian actress Hiam Abbas (*Lemon Tree*), for instance, has starred in countless films from the Arab world. Audiences have also been able to get to know a number of other Palestinian directors at festivals around the world, for instance, Rashid Masharawi (*Attente*), Raed Andoni (*Improvisation*), Mai Masri (*Beirut Diaries*), and - more recently - Annemarie Jacir (*Salt of this Sea*) and Najjwa Najjar (*Pomegranates and Myrrh*).

The "Cinema in Palestine" panel discussion will investigate what can be done to ensure that Palestinian audio-visual culture continues to thrive.

Making the Unknown Visible. The More Local, the More International

The *World Cinema Fund (WCF)* was founded in October 2004 as a joint initiative of the German Federal Cultural Foundation and the Berlinale. It immediately established itself as one of the leading institutions funding outstanding international productions and rapidly gained recognition from those in the industry. Funding from the *WCF* has become something like a mark of quality. The *WCF* focuses on the following regions: Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Central Asia, and - since summer 2007 - also South East Asia and the Caucasus. The rightsholders of films from these regions may also apply for *WCF* distribution funding for Germany.

Over the years, a total of 928 projects from 69 countries have been submitted to the *WCF*: 41 of these projects have received production funding. 15 films have been distributed to cinemas thanks to *WCF* funding. Many have also screened successfully at international film festivals. The submission deadline for production funding is March 12, 2009.

**59. Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin
05. – 15.02.2009**

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Press Release

WCF Film to Screen in the Berlinale Competition

The Peruvian-Spanish film *La teta asustada* (directed by Claudia Llosa), which received production funding from the *WCF* in November 2006, is participating in this year's *Berlinale Competition*. This work is the Peruvian director's second full-length feature and will have its world premiere on February 12, 2009.

World Cinema Fund Day 2009

Panel discussion: "Cinema in Palestine"

When: February 11, 2009 from 11 am - 2:30 pm
Where: Filmhaus, Potsdamer Str. 2 (4th floor)
Room 5

Berlinale accreditation required for admission.

Introduction and presentation: Vincenzo Bugno + Sonja Heinen

Participants: Alia Arasoughly (Director of Shashat's Women's Film Festival)
George Khleifi (director)
Irit Neidhardt (Mec Film, production and distribution for films from the Middle East)
Irina Orssich (MEDIA Mundus)
TBA, a representative of the Royal Jordan Film Commission

More information about the *WCF* at: www.berlinale.de
Or contact: worldcinemafund@berlinale.de

The *World Cinema Fund* is an initiative of the German Federal Cultural Foundation and the Berlin International Film Festival in cooperation with the Goethe Institute.



Press Office
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