

## Press Release



### **Berlinale Perspektive Deutsches Kino: A Look Back and Ahead**

The first films in the *Perspektive Deutsches Kino* programme are a surprise package of recent German cinema: they include Franka Potente's directorial debut, a silent film, road movies and melodramas taken straight from life, and a documentary film about a distant world that is still so near.

The *Perspektive Deutsches Kino* is in its fifth year. This section, which focuses on the filmmakers of tomorrow, is celebrating a small anniversary. Screening a total of nine world premieres, it shows that the future of contemporary German film is in good hands. A contributory factor here is actress Franka Potente's stint as director. Her first production, *Der die Tollkirsche ausgräbt (Digging For Belladonna)* involves a number of surprises. It is neither long nor short, but black-and-white and silent; nonetheless it reveals not only how pictures learned to move, but also how they learned to speak. The actress wrote and directed this homage and light-hearted reflection on her favourite medium. It features a silent Emilia Sparagna, as well as Christoph Bach, Max Urlacher, Justus von Dohnanyi and Teresa Harder.

The stories which young directors Florian Gaag and Bülent Akinci tell occur entirely in the here and now. Florian Gaag dares an exact and riveting look at the trials and tribulations, fun and frustrations of a group of graffiti writers in his modern melodrama *Wholetrain*. Dffb graduate Bülent Akinci, on the other hand, explores German reality through his main character in his tragicomic road movie *Der Lebensversicherer (Running On Empty)*. An exploration which becomes ever more surreal most likely for this very reason, and in a roundabout way brings the protagonist back to himself. It stars Jens Harzer and Anna Maria Mühe. Both of these feature film debuts are by the same producers who were responsible for the audience's favourites at the *Berlinale Competition* in 2005. *Wholetrain* is a Goldkind Film production (*Sophie Scholl*) and *Der Lebensversicherer* was produced by Razor Films (*Paradise Now*).

The first documentary in the programme takes us on a fascinating journey into the recent German past and depicts how it defines the present. *Katharina Bullin - Und ich dachte ich wär' die Größte (Katharina Bullin - And I Thought I Was The Greatest)* by Marcus Welsch tells a little-known story from the large stock of doping scandals in GDR competitive sports. Katharina Bullin was a volleyball player who not only lost her femininity but also her physical stability through sports and the drugs administered to her. The film is not just a moving portrait of a woman who has neither lost her will nor fighting power, but also the portrait of a brutal society. We see this in archive footage which fosters splendid illusions. Pictures from the past that are virtually transparent to us today.

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