

Press Release

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A very promising Kinderfilmfest at the Berlinale 2001

The Kinderfilmfest of the 51st Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin will take place from 8-18 February 2001, coinciding with the winter school holidays. Renate Zylla, Director of the Kinderfilmfest, invites everyone staying at home to come and see great films from around the globe. "Although the program is not yet complete, I can promise you that we shall be screening many extraordinary and outstanding films, including several impressive productions from Great Britain."

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In his modern fairy tale, *There's Only One Jimmy Grimble*, director John Hay masterfully brings together the tragic and the comic. His hero is 15-year-old Jimmy (Lewis McKenzie) who by the end of the film becomes the celebrated champion of Manchester Stadium. "I want people punching the air with joy at the end of the film", says John Hay. The film features three British topstars: Robert Carlyle, Gina McKee and Ray Winstone shine in major roles.

In *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* director Martin Duffy addresses compassionately and with subtle humor, questions essential to an adolescent's growing up process. Set in Wales, the film deals with the issues of love, belief and last but not least, with miracles. Professional actors Ian Bannen, Jonathan Pryce and Geraldine James lend their talent to the film, giving it credibility and depth.

Losing Touch by Sarah Gavron, student of the NFTS Beaconsfield, England, is a masterpiece. This graduation film is an uncompromising portrayal of how an 8-year-old experiences the painful loss of closeness and security.

The stamp of Aardmann Animation is unmistakable in *Hoooves of Fire*. In the 1980's, director Richard Goleszowski collaborated closely with Nick Park and Peter Lord, founders of this studio. His film sparkles cheekily with wit and irony and is full of funny quotes.

Danish director Natasha Arthy astonishes with a type of musical in her debut feature *Mirakel*. The story is cut with grotesque song-and-dance sequences which symbolise a fantasy world. A youth who is feeling sorry for himself meets an angel (Thomas Bo Larsen - *Festen, The Celebration*) who gives him the ability to make wishes come true. Only on one condition: Dennis P. may never curse again.

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Eine Veranstaltung der



It is incomparable how Nabil Ayouch portrays street children of Casablanca in *Ali Zaoua*. The daily struggle for survival has become a matter of course for these children. So-called civilized society, with its tendency to ignore them, has no chance of turning its back on this film. Poetry and hardship could not be expressed more powerfully.

Anokha Moti(The Magic Pearl) seduces with images from India's east coast. It tells the story of a fisherman who gives his daughter a magical gift. Good and evil are classically set against each other. With 42 features already to his credit, grand master Tapan Sinha has had previous successes at the Berlinale (1956: *Kabuliwala* / Silver Bear for music by Ravi Shankar, 1998: *Aaj ka Robin Hood* / Special Mention Kinderfilmfest).

The Dutch film *Mariken* is a screen adaption of Peter van Gestel's book of the same name. In André van Durens Film, Mariken (Laurien van Duren) moves through the darkness of the middle ages like a ray of light. Searching for truth, this girl with her large questioning eyes gives a very compelling performance. Egmond Film Productions (*Madelief - Scratches on the Table* 1999) is taking part for the second time.

Renate Zylla has observed an astonishing phenomenon: "No matter how different the stories are, they all have something in common. Although magic plays a significant role, it is ultimately the belief in one's own strength which is decisive."

Selection for the program will be concluded in early January. The remaining highlights of the Kinderfilmfest can be awaited with great suspense.

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