



News

Panorama Dokumente: History and Location

The selection for the celebrated *Panorama* Dokumente series in 2003 is complete.

Ever since the festival moved to the Potsdamer Platz, the *Panorama* Dokumente series' has its own theater, the CineStar 3. Yet the popularity of the series has been growing continually, so that this year two films will be screened in CinemaxX7, the theater usually reserved for the *Panorama*'s main programme.

The opening film of the *Panorama* Dokumente on Feb.7, 2003 in CinemaxX7 is: *Traces of a Dragon: Jackie Chan and his Lost Family* by Mabel Cheung and Alex Law (Hong Kong, China). Jackie Chan, one of the busiest stars in the history of film, is Hong Kong's number one stunt and martial-arts hero. The turbulent history of Hong Kong unravels almost in passing as Chan talks with his father about their family's astonishing past, one that also reflects the turmoil in China's developments over the last century. Supported by extensive, little known archive footage, the filmmakers turn this film into a pièce de résistance. At the *Panorama* in 1989, Alex Law presented his film *Painted Faces*, co-authored by Mabel Cheung.

Comandante by Oliver Stone (Spain) - also in CinemaxX7 Last represented in the Berlinale *Competition* of 2000 by *Any Given Sunday* and at the *Panorama* in 1988 by *Wall Street*, Oliver Stone has once again taken up documentary filmmaking after a three-year break. In this film he visits one of the most interesting personalities of the last century: Fidel Castro. Over several days, viewers experience Castro as a private individual who shares his thoughts on Ché Guevara and his assessments of Kennedy, Nixon, democracy and his relationship to life in an exciting dialogue with Stone.

A theme that is contemplated in several *Panorama* features films as well as in contributions to other festival sections, including the *Berlinale Talent Campus*, is the conflict in the Middle East:

Local Angel - Theological Political Fragments by Udi Aloni (USA, Israel) At the heart of this film is Udi Aloni's attempt to grasp the theological and political backdrop against which his mother Shulamit Aloni has been active for years in the freedom movement and as founder of the Israeli Civil Rights Movement. The film includes encounters with Hanan Ashrawi - in many respects his mother's Palestinian sister - and with Yassir Arafat, as well as the observations of leading, open-minded Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals. Hopelessness is not an acceptable prospect,

**Internationale
Film festspiele
Berlin**

Potsdamer Platz 11
10785 Berlin

www.berlinale.de

Ein Geschäftsbereich der
Kulturveranstaltungen des
Bundes in Berlin (KBB) GmbH



News

especially not for young people. Udi Aloni gives inspiration by letting the Palestinian rap group DAM and Israeli musicians have the floor.

Le chant du millenaire (The Song of the Millennium) by Mohamed Zran (France, Tunisia)

Reflection on and the determination of a location from the lips of those who otherwise have no say: with his film, Zran reveals to the viewer the country and its people, whose dreams for the future have to be measured against reality in Tunisia.

The *Panorama* feature film *El Kotbia (The Bookstore)* by Nawfel Saheb Ettaba incorporates other elements of experience in this topic.

Poligono sur (Seville, South Side) by Dominique Abel (Spain)

Space to live in is a matter of priority for the inhabitants of the Gitano district "Las tres mil" in Seville. In the 60s the satellite town was promoted as an attractive place to settle, today the police hardly dare enter the neighborhood, and public transportation has been discontinued. Seville has had to symbolically assume the position that Andalusia, the promised land of the Gitanos, still plays in their mentality today - Andalusia, where they were the driving force in the development of one of the greatest forms of expression in musical history: flamenco. The film features the members of some of Spain's most famous families of musicians.

Ich kenn keinen! - Allein unter Heteros (Talk Straight - The World of Rural Queers) by Jochen Hick (Germany)

Last represented in the *Panorama* of 2000 by his feature film *No One Sleeps*, Jochen Hick has once again devoted himself to a documentary. In it he takes stock of the state of emancipation in Germany in the age of gay marriages, whose popularity even conservative election campaigners have been wary to attack. Gay worlds are an established component of post-modern urban culture. Where then are the problems for four gay men in rural Swabia? They bear the crass comments that accompany their lives and are made by their "normal" acquaintances and friends, between church choir and their regular pub, with calm and humility.

After a longer absence, AIDS is again a topic of feature films in the *Competition* and the *Panorama*. Two documentary films present socio-political contemplations:

Fight Back, Fight AIDS - 15 Years of ACT UP by James Wentzy (USA) When in the mid-80s, gays started dying like flies, the world turned its back.



News

ACT UP became their effective voice in the media: and the very fact that this most patient of all minorities would summon up the energy to scream back “ACT UP”, had an unsettling effect on the world. This film depicts how their loosely organized, spectacular actions came about, and how Aids politicized the gay world toward self-responsibility: ashes are scattered onto the lawn outside of the White House of ignorant President Bush Sen., dead bodies laid out in front of Clinton who had broken his word - and the film historian Vito Russo (at the *Panorama* in 1983 with his lecture *The Celluloid Closet*) holds one of his last great speeches.

The Gift by Louise Hogarth (USA)

Twenty years after the appearance of Aids, the false belief has spread among younger generations that the disease is curable - or least one can live with it. But infection rates are rising again - also in the “gay community”, which had originally reacted exemplarily to the crisis and scored great successes with its educational campaign. It is phenomenal how quickly a collective memory can be wiped out, and how, in an anti-reaction to safe sex campaigns, a part of this very segment of the population is now consciously taking risks. The film explores the reasons for this shift, and gives people of all ages and different horizons a chance to speak.

“Berlin and Beyond” could be the heading above the four German contributions which examine both the present and the past:

Herr Wichmann von der CDU (Vote for Henryk!) by Andreas Dresen (Germany) A detailed look at the mental state of the eastern half of the nation: “Fresh wind will set politics in motion” - this is the election campaign slogan of Henryk Wichmann, 25, from the CDU. In the summer of 2002, he is a candidate for the German Bundestag and his district is Uckermark/Oberbarnim, at the very northeast of Brandenburg province. The region traditionally votes for the SPD, but Wichmann defiantly travels across the countryside and does not give up...

In 2002 Andreas Dresen presented *Halbe Treppe (Grill Point)* and in 1999 *Nachtgestalten (Night Shapes)* in the *Competition* of the Berlinale.

Ich bin, Gott sei Dank, beim Film! (Thank God, I'm in the Movies!) by Lothar Lambert (Germany) Feature-film director and icon of the underground, Lothar Lambert, whose films have often been screened in the *Panorama*, pays tribute to Berliner filmmaker Eva Ebner in a documentary. Her professional life is as old as the Federal Republic itself - be it as assistant director behind the camera or as actress in front of it. Whether *Mädchen in Uniform (Girls in Uniform, 1953)*, Atze Brauner's CCC Studios, the legendary Edgar Wallace films from the 60s or Ulrike



News

Ottinger's works - film history is a part of her. At eighty, however, she still has a disturbed relationship to the events of her childhood and her youth in Danzig, where experiences of having to flee and hide from the Nazi regime were deeply formative.

Bruno S. - Die Fremde ist der Tod (Estrangement - Is Death) by Miron Zownir (Germany)

When Bruno S. - whose previous life had taken place without any sort of recognition from society, in homes, shelters for the homeless and psychiatric institutions - went to the Cannes Film Festival in 1975, he was celebrated like a star. With his performance as Kaspar Hauser in Werner Herzog's film *Jeder für sich und Gott gegen alle (Every Man for Himself, and God against All)*, it seemed that this scorned outsider had finally succeeded in breaking out of his isolation. Also in his next film, *Stroszek*, Herzog cast Bruno S. in the lead - but then? This portrait by photographer Miron Zownir portrays an individual who, despite all disadvantages and without assistance from others, makes a way for himself.

Die Ritterinnen (The Female Knights) by Barbara Teufel (Germany)

A typical setting for Berlin in the 80s: a flat in Kreuzberg, a women's commune - emancipated, even militant. Some simply wanted to do everything without men, the others took a more relaxed view. When the Wall fell, the world changed... What became of the visions and desires of these so powerful times? Young women today try to understand the self-confident rebellion of those days - and the "original women" from the Ritterstraße take a look back.

Three documentary short films complete the programme:

Mogłem być człowiekiem (I Could Have Been Human) by Barbara Medajska (Poland), about the inhuman existence of coal scavengers who live at a dump; *Haçla (The Fence)* by Tariq Tegua (Algeria/ France), in which interviews with young Algerians document the dismal mood of hopelessness;

Just Call Me Kade by Sam Zolten (USA), about the open and supportive way a young family in the USA deal with their female-to-male transgendered child during puberty.

And as an homage to the filmmaker and co-founder of the Turin Gay&Lesbian Film Festival, Ottavio Mai:

Ottavio Mario Mai by Giovanni Minerba and Alessandro Golinelli (Italy)
Ten years after his death, the filmmaker Ottavio Mai who founded the



News

festival in 1986 with Giovanni Minerba, his professional partner and life companion, is honored with excerpts from his films and interviews with Italian artists and intellectuals. Simultaneously, a picture of Italy in the 70s unfolds, at the time when FIORI! was launched, the country's first gay movement. The festival has become one of the most important events for films dealing with gay, lesbian and transgender issues worldwide.

January 17, 2003