

## Press Release



### Berlinale-Series *Selling Democracy II – Winning the Peace*

In 2004, the Berlinale launched the first part of a highly regarded series of films from the U.S.A.'s recovery programme for Europe following World War II entitled *Selling Democracy – Welcome Mr. Marshall*. Conceived to run for a total of three years, the series will continue during the Berlin International Film Festival in 2005 and again in 2006. At the 55th Berlinale (February 10 - 20, 2005), works from the early post-war years, including so-called re-orientation films, are to be screened under the heading *Selling Democracy – Winning the Peace*. The programme will be augmented by feature films from the period that depict Europe's upheaval. In 2006, the project will close with *Selling Democracy – Friendly Persuasion*. The final series is to focus on how Europe changed as a result of modernization, mechanization and its emulation of "the American way of life".

"The political and humanitarian idea of these Marshall Plan films and their contribution to the democratization process constitute one of the most impressive political initiatives of the post-war years," Berlinale director Dieter Kosslick emphasizes. "We would like to reawaken an awareness for the unique and richly varied films produced in this era."

In 2005, the Berlinale is also expanding the retrospective: parallel to the film series, three workshops will be held that revolve around specific themes. One component of these workshops will be lectures by international historians and film experts – based on specific films, they will explore the significance and reception of the Marshall Plan films and their predecessors from the "re-orientation" period. As Rainer Rother, curator of *Selling Democracy* states: "The victors did not consciously ask themselves how to attain peace until after the war. The brilliancy of the Marshall Plan is that it helped people to help themselves and paved the way for the vision of a free and self-confident, reconstructed Europe. And, of course, the Soviet Union responded with counter-propaganda. As the GDR saw it, West Germany was under the heel of the USA; while in the eyes of the young Federal Republic of Germany, West Germany was on its way to freedom and prosperity. It is fascinating to explore these opposing positions today."

All the events – lectures by well-known experts, special screenings and discussions – will be open to the general public and are free of charge.

The entire retrospective has evolved in cooperation with Berlin's German Historical Museum (Deutsches Historisches Museum) and Federal Film Archive (Bundesarchiv / Filmarchiv).

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#### Press Office

Potsdamer Straße 5  
10785 Berlin

Tel. +49 • 30 • 259 20 • 707  
Fax +49 • 30 • 259 20 • 799

press@berlinale.de  
www.berlinale.de

Ein Geschäftsbereich der  
Kulturveranstaltungen des  
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#### Management:

Dieter Kosslick  
(Intendant Internationale  
Filmfestspiele Berlin),  
Dr. Thomas Köstlin  
(Kaufmännischer Geschäftsführer),  
Dr. Hans-Georg Knopp,  
Dr. Joachim Sartorius

Vorsitzende des Aufsichtsrats:  
Dr. Christina Weiss

Handelsregister: Amtsgericht  
Charlottenburg Nr. 96 HRB 29357  
USt ID DE 136 78 27 46