



16 World Premieres and 5 Debuts in the *Competition* of the Berlinale 2005

Twenty-one films will be competing for the Golden and Silver Bears in the *Competition* of the 55th Berlin International Film Festival. The programme in the Berlinale Palast will be rounded off by five more productions running hors concours. Five of the works selected for this year's *Competition* programme are feature debuts. A total of sixteen films are world premieres.

Besides the eleven productions already announced (Press Release Dec. 23, 2004: www.berlinale.de), another fifteen films will be screening:

The US-production *Sometimes in April* confronts viewers with the trauma of the gruesome civil war in Rwanda. Raoul Peck's film begins its investigation at the same location as Terry George's *Hotel Rwanda* does, but takes a completely different course. *Sometimes in April* stars Oris Erhuero, Idris Elba and Debra Winger and is showing as a world premiere in the *Competition*. Along with Régis Wargnier's opening film *Man to Man* and Mark Dornford-May's *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*, these films are evidence of the continuing interest in Africa.

Heights (USA/Great Britain), a directorial debut by Chris Terrio, intertwines the lives of five people on a summer day in New York in the shifting vagaries of love. This film is showing for the first time in Europe, hors concours in the *Competition*. Glenn Close, Isabella Rossellini and Elizabeth Banks play the leads.

In his debut film *Provincia Meccanica* (*Smalltown*, Italy), Italian director Stefano Mordini depicts how a young and unconventional family threatens to become undone by society's norms. This *Competition* film about these chaotic and loving parents features Stefano Accorsi and Valentina Cervi.

In the Danish production *Anklaget* (*Accused*) by Jacob Thuesen the life of family man Henrik (Troels Lyby) takes a dramatic turn when his daughter Stine (Kirstine Rosenkrands Mikkelsen) accuses him of a very serious crime. With this film, Thuesen, a cutter and documentary filmmaker, makes his debut as feature film director.

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Another international premiere is the episodic film *Tickets* (Italy, Great Britain) by Ermanno Olmi, Abbas Kiarostami and Ken Loach, running out of competition. Their interwoven stories of love, devotion and self-sacrifice all take place during a journey on a train to Rome. Valeria Bruni-Tedeschi, who was a member of the International Jury of the Berlinale in 2004, is one of the leading actors in these three episodes.

In *Les Mots Bleu* (*Words in Blue*) by French director Alain Corneau, a teacher tries to find out why a little girl is so uncommunicative. Sylvie Testud, Sergi Lopez, Camille Gauthier and Laurent Pétin co-star in this family story, which is screening for the first time worldwide.

A young man who leads a life at the edge of legality is the focus of French director Jacques Audiard's *De Battre Mon Coeur s'est arrêté* (*The Beat That My Heart Skipped*), a further world premiere in the *Competition*. The protagonist's efforts to give his life another direction involves him in a series of unusual situations. Romain Duris, Emmanuelle Devos and Niels Arestrup have been cast in the leading roles.

The Dutch-German-French co-production *Paradise Now* by Hany Abu-Assad will also be shown internationally for the first time. It gives an account of the last 48 hours in the lives of two Palestinian suicide bombers. The principal characters in this drama are played by Kais Nashief and Ali Suliman.

Russian director Aleksandr Sokurov will present the world premiere of his film *Solnze* (*The Sun* - Russian Federation, Italy, France), the third part of a trilogy on the psychology of power. The plot revolves around the Japanese Emperor Hirohito. The film features Issey Ogata, Kaori Momoi and Shiro Sano. Sokurov last participated in the Berlinale *Competition* in 1994 with *Tichie stranicy* (*Whispering Pages*).

Director Tsai Ming-Liang, whose *He Liu* (*The River*) ran in the *Competition* in 1997, once more takes up the topic of alienation and isolation in *Tian bian yi duo yun* (*The Wayward Cloud*), a Taiwanese-Chinese-French co-production. Colourful musical scenes are juxtaposed with explicit sex scenes. Chen Shiang-Chyi, Lee Kang-Sheng and Lu Yi-Ching co-star in this world premiere.



Pressemitteilung

Kakushi Ken-Oni no Tsume (The Hidden Blade) by Japanese director Yoji Yamada tells the story of a samurai who, in the mid-19th century, at a time of social upheaval, seeks his place in the world. This quest turns into a challenge of love. The film features Masatoshi Nagase, Takako Matsu and Hidetaka Yoshioka. Two years ago, Yoji Yamada's *The Twilight Samurai* screened in the *Competition* of the Berlinale.

Celebrated video-clip and short-film director Mike Mills will present *Thumbsucker* (USA), his feature debut. The film describes the equally bizarre and dramatic odyssey of a young teenager into drug addiction. It stars Lou Taylor-Pucci, Vincent D'Onofrio, Keanu Reeves and Tilda Swinton.

In Good Company (USA), Paul Weitz tells how the head of ad sales for a major sports magazine is forced to turn over his job to an ambitious whiz kid. Dennis Quaid, Topher Grace and Scarlett Johansson play the leads in this tale of competition, careers and the loss of control. This film is running as an international premiere in the Berlinale *Competition*.

Andy Tennant will present *Hitch* (USA) out of competition. In it Hollywood star Will Smith plays a notorious marriage broker, dubbed "Date Doctor", who has a talent for pairing off entirely unremarkable men with extremely desirable women. This international premiere also features Eva Mendes.

This year's Berlinale *Competition* will close with the American-German co-production *Kinsey* by Bill Condon (*Gods and Monsters*, 1998), which is also showing hors concours. Alfred C. Kinsey altered American culture with his book "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male" in 1948. Ever since he has been regarded as the father of scientific sex research. Liam Neeson and Laura Linney co-star in this story about the life of this dedicated scholar.

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