

Press Release



30th Retrospective at the 56th Berlin International Film Festival **Dream Girls. Film Stars of the Fifties**

The *Retrospective* of the 56th Berlin International Film Festival will be dedicated to the screen heroines of the 1950s. A diverse programme of 45 films will present 30 actresses from the US, Europe and Japan. The *Retrospective* focuses on the portrayal of femininity in international films of the post-war period, which mirrors the reactionary climate of the Cold War and questions the obsolete role models of the time.

With “Dream Girls”, the *Retrospective*, for which the Deutsche Kinemathek has been responsible since 1977, will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. “The theme is the image of women, as conveyed by international stars during the Fifties,” says Hans Helmut Prinzler, director of the *Retrospective*: “Many actresses play self-confident characters, shaped by existential experiences, who want to assert themselves in a male-dominated world. This connects directly back to our first *Retrospective* in 1977, in which we honoured Marlene Dietrich.”

Besides Hollywood icons such as Audrey Hepburn, Grace Kelly, Marilyn Monroe and Elizabeth Taylor, young actresses from Japan (Setsuko Hara), Sweden (Harriet Andersson), Hungary (Mari Töröcsik) and the USSR (Tatjana Samoilova) attracted attention at international film festivals and were great favourites with audiences. Europeans such as Hildegard Knef, Anna Magnani and Jean Simmons went to America, while Hollywood legends like Ingrid Bergman began a second career in Europe at the peak of their fame. Brigitte Bardot and Melina Mercouri embodied a new lifestyle and became idols for an entire generation.

“On the one hand there was a sense of a new beginning and progress, on the other hand nostalgia and prudery. The images of women, personified by the great stars of the period, reflect the tensions of this decade,” comments Berlinale director Dieter Kosslick.

In retrospect, many of these films show how much the decade was a time of political and cultural transformation. Celebrity actresses’ roles and their biographies often appeared to be tightly interwoven, and affirmed both traditional clichés of femininity and male desires. Contradicting these clichés, the heroines of many films on both sides of the Iron Curtain simply leave men – and the old order – behind.

**56th Berlin
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The *Retrospective* screenings will take place at CinemaxX Potsdamer Platz and in the Zeughauskino. In conjunction with the *Retrospective*, a publication titled “Traumfrauen. Stars im Film der fünfziger Jahre” will be published by Bertz + Fischer Verlag of Berlin. The Filmmuseum Berlin will host accompanying lectures and discussions. An exhibition at the museum also honours one of these actresses: “Hildegard Knef. An Artist from Germany” will be on display from November 24, 2005 to April 17, 2006.

Press Office
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