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## ***Berlin Today Award to Open the Berlinale Talent Campus 2007***

### ***Berlin Today Award & BerlinAngelsDay: Campus initiatives presented by Medienboard***

For 350 Talents from around the world, the *Campus* opening on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007, is a prelude for the 6 days of intensive encounters. For the BERLIN TODAY AWARD finalists, however, the event represents the culmination of an exciting year. At the Opening Night of the 2007 *Campus*, the BERLIN TODAY AWARD will be given out for the fourth time to the winner of the international short film competition. The year-round project of the *Campus* invites filmmakers to develop short film ideas relating to Berlin. Each year the three best concepts are selected by a committee and realised with the support of Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and the film industry. This year's finalists were produced by the Berlin-based company zero fiction film: *Shanty Garden Town*, by Guillaume Giovanetti (France) and Cagla Zencirci (Turkey), takes a poetic look at Berlin's allotment gardens. *The Great Water Battle*, by Katarzyna Klimkiewicz (Poland) and Andrew Friedman (USA), documents a unique and over-the-top Berlin tradition: the annual water fight between the neighbouring residents of Kreuzberg and Friedrichshain on the Oberbaum-bridge. The animated film *The Woolen Hat*, by Rhoda Kawinga (Zambia), tells the imaginative tale of the young girl Malita who saves the Berlin bears from a power-hungry cat. After the award ceremony, the next round of the competition beginning in 2007 will be called: Berlin Today – Create Your Vision.

For 50 Talents, the *Berlinale Talent Campus* week will count an extra day: the BerlinAngelsDay. On February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007, they get the opportunity to discover Berlin and its film industry, as well as establish important connections, with their 'BerlinAngels': renowned directors, producers and gamers from around the region. Some of the 'BerlinAngels' include Ziegler Film, Schiwago Film and Hahn Film, game developers like Yager, as well as the directors Bülent Akinci (*Running on Empty*) and Matthias Luthardt (*PingPong*). "The 'BerlinAngels' serve a very special purpose: as the mentors of these international talents they provide a glimpse into the creative potential of the city and lay a foundation of enduring contacts so that these young filmmakers will gladly return to Berlin in the future", explains Kirsten Niehuus, Managing Director of Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, one of the main partners of the *Campus*.

### ***Film Co-ops – Making Films with Friends***

The upcoming *Campus* would like to encourage young filmmakers to find their own path through the global film market by providing them with both help and practical assistance. Independent filmmakers, searching for artistic freedom in their working and storytelling methods, are in particular need of access to equipment, financial support and expertise, as well as creative exchanges to help move their projects forward. There has been a recent resurgence of filmmakers turning to film collectives as a survival strategy for independent and successful filmmaking. During the *Campus* panel "Making Films with Friends", members of successful film co-ops from around the world will share their experiences with the audience. Among the confirmed panel participants are Barbara Albert from the "Co-op 99", which nurtured films such as Jasmila Zbanic's *Esma's Secret—Grbavica*, winner of the Golden Bear in 2006, and the Lebanese filmmaker Eliane Raheb, a dedicated member of "DC Beirut", an initiative of independent Arab artists and filmmakers. This collective recently stirred things up with their video letter *From Beirut to... those who love us*, a critical examination of the war in Lebanon that got an enormous worldwide resonance.

The *Berlinale Talent Campus* is an initiative of the Berlin International Film Festival, a business division of the Kulturveranstaltungen des Bundes in Berlin GmbH, in co-operation with MEDIA - Training programme of the European Union, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Skillset and UK Film Council as well as Volkswagen.