

Press Release



57th Berlinale: International Cinema Stars on the Jury

This year, seven international stars and film experts will decide who is to take home the Golden Bear and the Silver Bears. Under Jury President Paul Schrader, Hiam Abbass, Mario Adorf, Gael García Bernal, Willem Dafoe, Nansun Shi and Molly Malene Stensgaard will bring glamour, passion and expertise to Berlin.

American Gigolo is the best-known film directed by Jury President **Paul Schrader**. Though it was with the screenplay to *Taxi Driver* that he made film history (1976). By continuing his collaboration with director Martin Scorsese, he also went on to celebrate success with *Raging Bull* (1980) and *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988). Schrader gave his directorial debut in 1978 with *Blue Collar*. It was followed, for instance, by *Mishima* in 1985. His film adaptation of *The Comfort of Strangers* (1991), a novel by Ian McEwan, with a script by Nobel Prize winner Harold Pinter, was outstanding. Schrader screened his crime drama *Light Sleeper* in the 1992 Berlinale *Competition*.

The Palestinian actress **Hiam Abbass** also writes screenplays and directs films. Abbass, who lives in Paris, has starred in excellent films over the past years. For example, she displayed her versatility in *Red Satin* (2002) and then again as *The Syrian Bride* (2004). Most recently she performed in Hany Abu-Assad's *Paradise Now* (2005) and Steven Spielberg's *Munich* (2005).

With **Mario Adorf**, this year's jury includes a connoisseur of German cinema. More than 120 film and television roles have made him one of the most famous actors in Germany. Adorf has starred in films such as Volker Schlöndorff's *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* and *The Tin Drum*, in Fassbinder's *Lola* and in Helmut Dietl's *Rossini*. He has also performed in many international productions – including films by Claude Chabrol, Sergio Corbucci, Sam Peckinpah and Billy Wilder, among others.

Since his screen debut in the Oscar nominated *Love's a Bitch* by Alejandro González Iñárritu, Mexican actor **Gael García Bernal** is not just a celebrated star in his own country. Walter Salles cast him as Che Guevara in *The Motorcycle Diaries* and Pedro Almodóvar in *Bad Education*. In 2006, Bernal could be seen in the Berlinale *Competition* film *The Science of Sleep* and in Iñárritu's tremendously successful *Babel*.

Willem Dafoe is one of the most highly esteemed actors from the USA and is seen as a master of intriguing dark characters. After his debut in Michael Cimino's *Heaven's Gate* (1980), he won worldwide acclaim as a soldier in Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1986). He has given brilliant performances in blockbusters like *Spider-Man* as well as in arthouse productions by David Cronenberg, Lars von Trier or Martin Scorsese. Dafoe is also well-known for his stage performances, in particular for his work with the legendary "Wooster Group".

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With film producer **Nansun Shi** from Hong Kong, a woman is coming to Berlin who has been described by *Variety* magazine as one of the 50 most influential indie filmmakers around the world. One of the biggest successes of her 20-year career was the prize-winning Hong Kong thriller *Infernal Affairs*, on which Scorsese based *The Departed*. In addition she produced Tsui Hark's epic martial-arts movie *Seven Swords*, which opened the Venice Biennale in 2005.

Film editor **Molly Malene Stensgaard** from Denmark has worked on almost every film made by her fellow countryman Lars von Trier – from the series *The Kingdom* to *The Idiots*, *Dancer in the Dark*, *Dogville* and *Manderlay*. In doing so she has left her mark on Danish cinema. In addition, she has worked, for example, with director Anette K. Olesen, whose film *In Your Hands* screened in the Berlinale *Competition* three years ago.

Festival director Dieter Kosslick is already certain it will not be an easy job for the members of the International Jury to make their decisions: "I wouldn't like to be in their shoes. But if anyone can master this difficult task, then these seven."

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