

Press Release



World cinematography of sharp contrasts and astonishing parallels: this year's programme of the Berlinale Forum comprises films from 31 countries including 25 world premieres and 15 debut films.

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The Berlinale *Forum* is regarded as a laboratory for the mainstream cinema of the future. This is how one would wish mainstream cinema to be: Oddball, like Kevin Aduaka's directing debut *Elvis Pelvis*, a painfully interlocked father-and-son story revolving around the idols Elvis Presley and Jimi Hendrix. Disturbing, like Li Ying's *Mona Lisa*, which unfolds the story of a child's abduction between documentary and feature film. Sassy and colorful, like *Ichijiku no kao (Faces of a Fig Tree)*, the directing debut of renowned Japanese actress Momoi Kaori, who portrays a bizarre nuclear family. Smart, like *a.k.a. Nikki S. Lee*, the self-portrait of the Korean-American artist, which, like her photographic self-stagings, challenges our belief in documentary truths. Challenging, like *Dol*, the new feature film by the Iraqi Kurd Hiner Saleem, who with defiant sarcasm spins tales from the Kurdish region at the borders of three countries. Powerful, like Jeff Nichols' *Shotgun Stories*, about a family feud between half brothers in the South of the USA. Playful and dreamy, like Thomas Imbach's *I Was a Swiss Banker*, an underwater fairytale from capitalist Switzerland.

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Imbach's feature film is part of a German-language emphasis in this year's programme. It is joined by Ann-Kristin Reyels' remarkable directing debut, *Jagdhunde (Hounds)*, shot in the state of Brandenburg in the winter. Maria Speth's mature second film *Madonnen (Madonnas)*, in which Sandra Hüller delivers an acting tour de force as mother and daughter, and Angela Schanelec's surprising *Nachmittag (Afternoon)*, a variant of Chekhov's "The Sea Gull" transposed to the present day between Potsdam and Berlin. Austrian filmmaker Anja Salomonowitz takes a documentary approach with her perfectly structured *Kurz davor ist es passiert (It Happened Just Before)*, in which, in their homes or at work, a customs official, a taxi driver, a diplomat, a villager, and a brothel waiter recite the reports of women suffering of trans-border trafficking. Also from Austria are Ulrike Ottinger's portrait of Vienna's institution, the *Prater*, and Heinz Emigholz' *Schindlers Häuser (Schindler's Houses)*, a cinematic inventory of the work of architect Rudolph Schindler in the Los Angeles area. Philip Scheffner's *The Halfmoon Files* traces the colonial past to the present in sound documents. Stefan Schwietert's *Heimatklänge* portrays three artists who develop traditional Swiss music in very different and unconventional ways.

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The 37th *Forum* shows a world cinematography of sharp contrasts and astonishing parallels, from Bollywood – Farhan Akhtar's fast-paced new version of the classic gangster film *Don* – to the football stadium – French national player Vikash Dhorasoo and Super-8 filmmaker Fred Poulet revisit the 2006 world cup from the substitutes' bench in *Substitute*. The selection does not seek balance, but emphasizes and contrasts. Thus, in his three-and-a-half-hour *State Legislature*, renowned documentary director Frederick Wiseman examines democracy in practice in the



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state of Idaho, while Japanese filmmaker Kazuhiro Soda observes in *Campaign* the election bid of a young candidate on the long leash of an all-powerful party machinery.

Films in the Forum 2007

...a bude hůř (It Gonna Get Worse) by Petr Nikolaev, Czech Republic (IP)
A Walk into the Sea: Danny Williams and the Warhol Factory by Esther B. Robinson, USA (WP)
a.k.a. Nikki S. Lee by Nikki S. Lee, USA/Republic of Korea (IP)
Ad Lib Night (Aju teukbyeolhan sonnim) by Lee Yoon-ki, Republic of Korea (IP)
Armin by Ognjen Sviličić, Croatia/Germany/Bosnia and Herzegovina (WP)
Campaign (Senkyo) by Kazuhiro Soda, USA/Japan (WP)
Le cercle des noyés (Drowned by Oblivion) by Pierre-Yves Vandeweerdt, Belgium/France (IP)
Chrigu by Jan Gassmann, Christian Zörjen, Switzerland (IP)
Dans les villes (In the Cities) by Catherine Martin, Canada (IP)
Dol by Hiner Saleem, Iraqi Kurdistan Region/France/Germany (IP)
Elvis Pelvis by Kevin Aduaka, Great Britain/France (WP)
L'esprit des lieux (The Spirit of Places) by Catherine Martin, Canada (IP)
Extranjera (Foreigner) by Inés de Oliveira César, Argentina/Greece/Poland (WP)
Eye in the Sky (Gen zong) by Yau Nai Hoi, Hongkong, China (WP)
Faro, la reine des eaux by Salif Traoré, Mali/France/Canada/Germany (WP)
The Halfmoon Files by Philip Scheffner, Germany (WP)
Heimatklänge by Stefan Schwietert, Switzerland/Germany (WP)
I Was a Swiss Banker by Thomas Imbach, Switzerland (WP)
Ichijiku no kao (Faces of a Fig Tree) by Momoi Kaori, Japan (IP)
Jagdhunde (Hounds) by Ann-Kristin Reyels, Germany (WP)
Kain no matsuei (Cain's Descendant) by Oku Shutaro, Japan
Klopka (The Trap) by Srdan Golubović, Serbia/Germany/Hungary (WP)
Kurz davor ist es passiert (It Happened Just Before) by Anja Salomonowitz, Austria (IP)
Madonnen (Madonnas) by Maria Speth, Germany/Switzerland/Belgium (WP)
Mona Lisa (Meng Na Li Sha) by Li Ying, People's Republic of China/Japan (WP)
Nachmittag (Afternoon) by Angela Schanelec, Germany (WP)
Pas douce (A Parting Shot) by Jeanne Waltz, France/Switzerland (WP)
Potosi, le temps du voyage (Potosi, the Journey) by Ron Havilio, Israel/France (WP)
Prater by Ulrike Ottinger, Austria/Germany (WP)



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Rıza by Tayfun Pirselimoglu, Turkey (WP)

Schindlers Häuser (Schindler's Houses) by Heinz Emigholz, Austria (WP)

Shotgun Stories by Jeff Nichols, USA (WP)

Stone Time Touch by Gariné Torossian, Canada/Armenia (WP)

Substitute by Fred Poulet, Vikash Dhorasoo, France (IP)

El telón de azúcar (The Sugar Curtain) by Camila Guzmán Urzúa, Cuba/Spain/France (IP)

Tout refleurit (All Blossoms Again) by Aurélien Gerbault, France (IP)

Tuli by Aureus Solito, Philippines

Village People Radio Show (Apa khabar orang kampung) by Amir Muhammad, Malaysia (WP)

Wolfsbergen by Nanouk Leopold, Netherlands/Belgium (WP)

Special screenings:

Brand Upon the Brain! by Guy Maddin, Canada (EP)

Don by Farhan Akhtar, India

Killer of Sheep by Charles Burnett, USA 1977

State Legislature by Frederick Wiseman, USA (WP)

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