

Press Release



Berlinale Special 2007: Remembrance and Experiment

The *Berlinale Special* is part of the festival's official programme and presents recent works by contemporary filmmakers whose films the Berlinale wants to honour. Several of this year's films focus on existential events from 20th century history. This blend of remembrance, information and experiment will screen at two main venues: the "Filmpalast" on Kurfürstendamm and the "International" on Karl-Marx-Allee.

This year's *Berlinale Special* includes nine films, five of which are world premieres. Another three films in this series are to be shown on occasion of the *Berlinale Camera* award ceremonies (to be announced on January 30, 2007).

Simon Wiesenthal, who devoted himself to tracking down Nazi war criminals until his death in 2005, is the focus of Richard Trank's documentary *I Have Never Forgotten You – The Life and Legacy of Simon Wiesenthal* (USA). Shot in nine countries, the film contains previously unseen archival material as well as interviews with Wiesenthal's associates, friends and family, most of whom speak for the first time in front of a camera. The film is narrated by Nicole Kidman. Sir Ben Kingsley and Rabbi Marvin Hier will also attend the documentary's world premiere at the Berlinale.

The famous Italian auteur filmmakers Paolo and Vittorio Taviani have again condensed modern historical events into an exemplary tale in *La masseria delle allodole/The Lark Farm* (Italy/Bulgaria/France/Spain). The film revolves around the members of a family who, due to the command to eliminate the Armenian minority in May 1915, have to fight for their lives. The film stars Paz Vega, Moritz Bleibtreu, Arsinée Khanjian, Tcheky Karyo and Angela Molina. (World premiere)

Krisztina Goda's *Szabadság, szerelem/Children of Glory* (Hungary/GB) illuminates how politics and sports interact by portraying what was called "the bloodiest match ever played", between the water polo teams of the Soviet Union and Hungary at the Olympic Games in 1956. The match took place in Melbourne, shortly after the Hungarian Revolt was put down by the Soviets. The outrage of many spectators was still so great that they attacked the Soviet players. Iván Fenyő, Kata Dabó and Sándor Csányi star in the film. (International premiere)

In *Day on Fire* (USA), Jay Anania tells of five people whose paths cross on a winter day in New York. By happenstance, a Palestinian journalist, a model, a doctor and a singer – unwittingly connect with a mysterious man. In a reflective narrative style, the author describes how terror can suddenly intrude into everyday routines. The film's illustrious cast includes Carmen Chaplin, Martin Donovan, Olympia Dukakis and Alyssa Sutherland. (European premiere)

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Based on a comic by Manga artist Anno Moyoco, photographer Mika Ninagawa takes us to the world of courtesans in her first feature *Sakuran* (Japan). The film is set in the Edo period and depicts the fate of a young girl who, in the notorious red light district of Tokyo, is sold and then schooled to become a high-class courtesan. Anna Tsuchiya, who plays the leading role, is a famous model and rock musician in Japan. (World premiere)

In Fernando Pérez's new film *Madrigal* (Spain/Cuba) reality and fiction merge in a deliberately stylised production. The first of two tales is set in the theatre world of modern Havana; the second is an account of erotic delirium, set in the future. After a number of successful films (*Life is to Whistle*, *Havana Suite*), Fernando Pérez is now regarded as one of Cuba's most important directors. (World premiere)

How To Cook Your Life (Germany) by Doris Dörrie (*Men; The Fisherman and his Wife*) is about Zen and the art of cooking. Featuring Californian Zen master Edward Espe Brown, this documentary shows how the principles of Zen Buddhism can be applied to the preparation of food – and, ultimately, to life itself. (World premiere)

Uli Gaulke, who was widely acclaimed for *Havanna, mi amor*, depicts in *Comrades in Dreams* (Germany) the trials and tribulations which movie lovers are willing to endure in order to share the fascination of film with others. The documentary portrays major and minor dramas and incidents accompanying film screenings in India, Burkina Faso, the USA and North Korea. (European premiere)

Timur Bekmambetov's new film, *Dnevnoy Dozor/Day Watch* (Russia) is the second part of his action-packed fantasy adventure *Night Watch*, which was one of Russia's biggest blockbusters of the past years and celebrated its premiere at the Berlinale in 2005. In this work, the battle of light and dark forces continues. Konstantin Khabensky plays Anton, who wants to rescue his son from the clutches of evil. The film co-stars Mariya Poroshina and Vladimir Menshov. (International premiere)

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