

## Press Release



### **World Cinema Fund Celebrates Its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Launches an Additional Funding Project: *WCF Europe***

On its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the *World Cinema Fund (WCF)* looks back at a successful and productive decade. Since its establishment, it has backed a total of 119 projects from 41 countries: it has granted production funds 84 times and given distribution funds to 35 films for release in German cinemas. In 2015, the *WCF* will expand its funding programme to include a special project: *WCF Europe*.

Founded in 2004, the *WCF* was initiated by the German Federal Cultural Foundation and the Berlin international Film Festival. It quickly established itself as one of the leading institutions in the field of international film funding for high-quality productions. In 2005, the Goethe-Institut came on board as cooperation partner and the German Federal Foreign Office stepped in to help cover administrative costs. As of 2015, the Foreign Office will increase its commitment and so become an additional main partner.

Der *WCF* concentrates on backing the production and distribution of films from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, Central and Southeast Asia, as well as Mongolia, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Funds are given to German co-producers of *WCF* films: without exception, *WCF* funds have to be spent in *WCF* funding regions and countries.

The goal is to promote high-quality filmmaking in regions with a poor infrastructure for film, while fostering cultural diversity in German cinemas as well as supporting collaboration between German producers and partners in *WCF* regions and countries. All *WCF* films completed to date have screened at cinemas and/or in the programmes of renowned festivals. Many have also won prizes, proof of the worldwide success of the initiative.

*WCF*-funded projects include, for instance, *La Teta Asustada (Milk of Sorrow)*, which won the Berlinale Golden Bear in 2009; and *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*, winner of Cannes' Golden Palm in 2010.

“When the German Federal Cultural Foundation launched the *World Cinema Fund* with the Berlin International Film Festival ten years ago, it quickly became clear that we would not be alone for long with our idea. And that’s exactly what happened: not only do the many outstanding international awards attest to the *WCF*’s high standards in production funding, but German cinema has also profited from its distribution

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funding programme. The *World Cinema Fund* is a success story: over the years it has grown and extended its reach. And for the time being, the Federal Cultural Foundation has secured its financing of the *World Cinema Fund* until 2018. The terms are good and will allow us to continue our work successfully,” says Hortensia Völckers, Artistic Director of the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

Alongside its funding activities, the *WCF* annually organises a “*WCF Day*” during the Berlinale. In panel discussions, film cultures and infrastructures in individual countries or regions are debated. Moreover, since 2007, in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut, there have been “Spotlights” with *WCF*-funded films and workshops in the funding regions. In 2011, the *WCF* also implemented two training courses in the field of sound and editing for contemporary film productions at so-called “*WCF Factories*” in Burundi and Burkina Faso.

Thanks to the support of the European Commission’s Creative Europe sub-programme MEDIA, the *World Cinema Fund* is expanding its portfolio and launching a special project for its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, titled *WCF Europe*.

In 2015 and 2016, *WCF Europe* will supplement the existing programme of the *World Cinema Fund* and back further co-productions between European producers, and directors and producers from *WCF* regions and countries. Applications may be submitted by European producers from MEDIA sub-programme countries and production firms in *WCF Europe* regions (*WCF* regions and countries, as well as the Ukraine, Belarus and Moldavia), that can document that they are already collaborating on their current project with a European partner.

Distribution funds will be granted to films that are being released jointly by three distributors: at least one must be from Europe and one from a *WCF* region or country. Funding for the coming two years will total 300,000 euros.

The Berlinale and its *World Cinema Fund* are also delighted that the German Federal Foreign has increased its commitment and is now involved as additional main partner.

“The *WCF*’s success is proof of its topicality, and commitment to world cinema and cultural diversity. We thank Hortensia Völckers and the Federal Cultural Foundation for backing us all these years. I would also like to welcome the German Federal Foreign Office on board as another important partner. Funds from the Foreign Office allow us to pursue the goal of contributing internationally to partner-based cooperations and co-productions. Many thanks to the Foreign Office for this,” comments Berlinale Director Dieter Kosslick.

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For further information, please go to:

[http://www.berlinale.de/en/branche/world\\_cinema\\_fund/wcf\\_profil/index.html](http://www.berlinale.de/en/branche/world_cinema_fund/wcf_profil/index.html)

The *World Cinema Fund* is an initiative of the German Federal Cultural Foundation and the Berlin International Film Festival in cooperation with the Federal Foreign Office and further support from the Goethe-Institut.



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