



Press Release

Panorama 2015: Probing the past to shape the future

Worldviews - silencing history stunts developments tomorrow. New cinema attempts to force politics to shed its lethargy.

The eleven fictional and eight documentary films selected at this early date already provide a foretaste of the contents and global issues of the forthcoming 36th *Panorama* programme.

East Asia will again make a strong showing in 2015. Already confirmed are significant works by renowned directors from Taiwan and South Korea. They could be labelled “modern history” or even “national traumas”: unparalleled *Panorama* explorations of 20th century history and its effect on the rapidly changing conditions in these two countries.

With *Paradise in Service*, *Panorama* director Doze Niu Chen-Zer, from movie wonderland Taiwan (still well remembered are his hits *Monga* and *Love*), takes on a difficult chapter of East Asian history that has hardly been dealt with before: the establishment of brothels to keep up the morale of armed forces in the battle “against Mao”. This topic, which is regarded today as one of the major scores still unsettled between Japan and Korea, can be seen as a rapprochement from the Taiwanese perspective, and is inner-Chinese in kind: female inmates of the country’s penitentiaries, including those who were war prisoners, were promised sentence reduction or even release if they would work as prostitutes in military brothels.

With JK Youn’s epic *Ode to My Father*, South Korea, half of a still divided country, investigates the repercussions of the Korean War and its impact on today. As the Americans retreat from communist Chinese troops marching into northern Korea, and take roughly 14,000 people who are fleeing onto their ships, a family gets separated: the father and one little daughter are left behind, while the mother with the three other siblings succeeds in fleeing on a US warship to what is South Korea today. Upon arrival there, this truncated family experiences the misery and discrimination often afflicted on refugees, but also the will to rebuild and optimism of those who have nothing to lose. This spirit triggered the South Korean industrial miracle, which was also accelerated by the flow of cash from “guest workers” who, under adverse conditions, earned a livelihood in Germany. Attempts via the media to reunite thousands of families have reopened old wounds, but also brought unexpected happiness.

The USA’s presence will also be felt in the *Panorama*: After *Henry Fool* and *Fay Grim* (*Panorama* 2007), cult filmmaker Hal Hartley, an iconic figure from the golden days of 1980s US-independent film, has concluded his trilogy with a masterpiece: *Ned Rifle*. Ned is Fay’s son, and he tells

**65. Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin
05. – 15.02.2015**

Presse

Potsdamer Straße 5
10785 Berlin

Phone +49 • 30 • 259 20 • 707
Fax +49 • 30 • 259 20 • 799

press@berlinale.de
www.berlinale.de

Ein Geschäftsbereich der
Kulturveranstaltungen des
Bundes in Berlin (KBB) GmbH

Geschäftsführung:

Prof. Dieter Kosslick
(Intendant Internationale
Filmfestspiele Berlin),
Charlotte Sieben
(Kaufmännische Geschäftsführung),
Prof. Dr. Bernd M. Scherer,
Dr. Thomas Oberender

Vorsitzende des Aufsichtsrates:
Staatsministerin
Prof. Monika Grütters MdB

Amtsgericht Charlottenburg
HGR Nr. 96 • HRB 29357
USt ID DE 136 78 27 46



Press Release

the other side of the story of this family suspected of terrorism: brilliantly performed and directed, a noble and tranquil work that displays a fine sense of humour, a rarity in US cinema.

Justin Kelly provides an unusual directorial debut with his work *I Am Michael*, which was co-produced by Gus Van Sant. In it James Franco portrays a gay activist in the so emancipating 1980s. Despite social success and an exemplary role in the emancipation of gays, he is not able to overcome his self-loathing. Ultimately, in the 1990s, he conforms to religious conventions with the hope (hope being the currency of the Church) of leading a heterosexual life.

Also set in the 1980s is an example of a filmmaker's extraordinary perseverance, even though his work was edited beyond recognition by its investors: seventeen years after the premiere of the film *54*, about the legendary New York nightclub, Studio 54, director Mark Christopher (his first short film *Alkali*, Iowa was in *Panorama* and won a Teddy Award in 1996) is presenting his original cut *54 - The Director's Cut* to the public - exactly at a time when the rediscovery of the 1980s is providing enjoyment on all levels.

Audience Award-winners of *Panorama* 2009 were *The Yes Men*, satirists, anarchists, demaskers of the power elite and pranksters in pursuit of unscrupulous profit mongering during the current crises of the USA and Europe. In 2015 they are returning to Berlin for the third time with *The Yes Men Are Revolting*. They now aim their barbs at the Copenhagen Climate Conference and create havoc for the oil giant Shell. But also Uganda, with its lethal homophobic politics, and the UN in New York, with its obsession with safety and security that has supplanted its readiness to act, are targets for their telling attacks. Their success in Berlin is as good as guaranteed.

Director and 2002 Golden Bear jury member Raoul Peck will present his latest work in the *Panorama*: the Haitian-French-Norwegian co-production *Murder in Pacot* (screenplay: Pascal Bonitzer). A character piece, set outdoors against a stylish home destroyed by the earthquake in Port-au-Prince, looks with bitter rage at class distinctions in Haitian society. In the midst of the catastrophe, the meaning of these distinctions vanishes, but as the quality of life begins improving, great effort goes into their re-establishment - not to mention also the corrupt behaviour of some NGOers in the country.

Still in progress is the selection from Latin America, traditionally a major focus of the *Panorama*, one that accounts for many discoveries from the new wave of innovative Latino cinema. A co-production from Uruguay and Chile has already been confirmed: Aldo Garay's *The New Man*. Here, too, recent history is examined: in the heat of the battle that Tupamaros and



Press Release

Sandinistas are fighting against the military dictatorships in their respective countries, Roberto, a young boy from Nicaragua, suddenly finds himself with foster parents in Uruguay. When he then decides to adapt his gender and become Stephanie, he is also confronted with the limits of tolerance in a leftist society. Astute analyses as well as the moving story of this individual give an unprecedented picture of such communities during the political upheaval of the 1970s.

Child abuse is not only the subject of the aforementioned *The New Man*, but also of films from Austria (*The Last Summer of the Rich* by Peter Kern), Switzerland (*Dora or the Sexual Neuroses of Our Parents* by Stina Werenfels), Canada (*Chorus* by Francois Delisle) and the Czech Republic (*Daniel's World* by Veronika Liskova). Evidently the time is ripe to broach this difficult topic again and in so doing take even greater risks: the *Panorama* is pleased to be able to partake in this trend.

In a highly artificial style, Peter Kern gives the young, modern and worldly Hanna von Stezewitz (Amira Casar, alongside Nicole Gerdon, Winfried Glatzeder, Heinz Trixner and Traute Furthner) room to confront her family's past. Stina Werenfels explores the unresolvable challenge confronting parents of a disabled daughter, who has just come of age and discovered her sexuality, and thus raises the question of accountability. In cool, brilliant and laconically composed black-and-white images and sparing dialogue, Francois Delisle tells, from all sides, of the pain of a couple whose eight-year-old son disappeared ten years ago; when the case is suddenly solved, they suffer all over again. Exemplary is the openness with which Veronika Liskova deals with the topic of her film: aware of his paedophilic condition, her protagonist goes public and seeks transparency: for nothing aids and abets crime more than silence.

The Norwegian fictional film *Out of Nature* by Ole Giæver and Marte Vold (Giæver presented *The Mountain* in the 2011 *Panorama*) is a zeitgeisty parable about a man, and his search for identity and joy in life. The young father needs a break from parental bliss: he retreats to the mountains to rethink what he wants from life. Is it convention that is making him feel trapped? Is this him? Husband and daddy, valiant, modern and hetero, masculine?

In the Swedish contribution *Dyke Hard* by Bitte Anderson, all the stops have been pulled on what makes indie cinema so entertaining. A zany, quasi musical of post-punk-lesbo-rock-'n'-roll calibre. In Anderson's directorial debut, a women band, whose lead singer has been lost to evil powers, tries to still make it to a music contest: this is underground fun at its purest, a rarity in these more opportunistic times.



Press Release

Five other films (besides *The New Man*, *The Yes Men Are Revolting* und *Daniel's World*) have already been confirmed for *Panorama Dokumente*:

B-Movie - Lust & Sound in West-Berlin by Jörg A. Hoppe, Klaus Maeck and Heiko Lange also embraces this rediscovered pleasure in the 1980s: a cornucopia of unbridled creativity spurts from this period in Berlin, which is revealed here to have been a highpoint. Alongside almost forgotten gems are tracks by Gudrun Gut, Blixa Bargeld and Nick Cave, as well as diverse footage from filmmakers from past times, in which something similar to anarchy was a driving force.

Scandal at the Zoo Palast: R.W. Fassbinder's conquest of the Berlinale began with *Love Is Colder than Death* in the 1969 *Competition*. In *Fassbinder - To Love without Demands*, Danish filmmaker Christian Braad Thomsen opens his archive and generously gives us a contemplative afternoon in a hotel room in Cannes with this unendingly inspiring filmmaker.

Kenya is among those African countries where, under the influence of evangelical organisations from the United States, hatred has been ignited against homosexuals. In *Stories of Our Lives*, Jim Chuchu lets a whole range of brave people talk. Banned in its country of origin, the film also presents pre-Christian rites that respect self-determination much more than society today.

In his 162-minute 3D documentary, Iraqi-Swiss filmmaker Samir masterly depicts the latest, highly complex history of Iraq as revealed by events in a family.

Last not least, news of a celebration! On February 13, 2014, the Teddy Awards will be presented for the second time at the Komische Oper Berlin. The Special Teddy 2015 will go to Udo Kier. Almost no other actor has crossed, fused, redrawn and extended the many boundaries of cinematic art with such ease. As he so brilliantly did in a whirl of questions of identity and gender, and the joys of performing and meaning at the Berlinale in the *Panorama* film *Iron Sky*.

Please don't hesitate to ask us any questions you may have. We'll be delighted to answer them.

Best regards,

Wieland Speck
Panorama
panorama@berlinale.de
+49 (0) 30-259 20 400