

Press Release



***Berlinale Special 2018 - Berlinale Series* Presents Long-Awaited Highlights and Shines a Spotlight on Newcomers in the World of Drama Series**

The seven series from Australia, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Israel, Norway, and the US will surprise viewers with a diversity of the content and production.

The series will look into the depths of the human soul, and portray the insatiable hunger for wealth, power, and acknowledgement. They depict reactionary political systems, but also turmoil and break-up in society, as well as protagonists who couldn't be more different as they self-confidently follow their own paths. As varied as the subject matter is, the series all prove that power structures have continually repeated themselves in differing forms over the last few decades. And that resistance is not only possible, but necessary.

Berlinale Series opens with the visually thrilling TV adaptation of the Australian cult classic *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. Natalie Dormer plays the strict headmistress of a boarding school trying to ensure that her pupils receive a suitably decorous education. But we are led to question whether she herself has always led a demure life. Her dark past catches up with her, and then three girls disappear mysteriously during a school outing.

The heroine of the Israeli TV series *Sleeping Bears* is also forced to face up to her past. Her therapist dies in an accident, and the transcripts of his session notes are sent to her as part of an anonymous threat. She wants to prevent her family finding out about her most intimate secrets and dreams. This private story becomes an expedition into contemporary Israel.

The German series *Bad Banks* takes a close look at a young, talented, and very ambitious woman. She leads the viewer deep into the unscrupulous, profit-hungry world of finance. Her working life in Frankfurt and Luxembourg is ruled by the forces of greed, egotism, the pressure to succeed, and machismo.

The female protagonist of the Norwegian series *Heimebane (Home Ground)* also ventures into a male domain. She plays a trainer who leaves her successful women's football team to become the first female trainer of a Norwegian premier league men's team. She wages a hard fight against ingrained bias, as she struggles towards her dream. She is out to prove that, given the same qualifications, women are every bit as good as men.

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The TV adaptation of the non-fiction bestseller *The Looming Tower* takes viewers inside the CIA and the FBI at the end of the 1990s. Indications of an attack on the US mount, but the two powerful institutions are locked in a calamitous rivalry. That competition is embodied by two men - played by Peter Sarsgaard and Jeff Daniels - who do battle on a strategic, bureaucratic level, all the while underestimating the increasing dangers.

Meanwhile, *The Terror* presents an epic spectacle in the best sense; it is based on Dan Simmons' fictionalised account of Sir John Franklin's Arctic expedition. The men battle with not only the natural world, but also the strict hierarchy and balance of power on board ship. The vast expanses of perpetual ice create an ominous sense of claustrophobia from which there is no escape.

Liberty is set in 1980s Tanzania in the milieu of aid workers and ex-pats. A critical examination of the lasting effects of colonialism, the character driven family tale is based on the novel "Liberty" by Jakob Ejersbo. It features businessmen, who unscrupulously use the old structures of local exploitation to their own ends, as well as people working in development aid who, however well intentioned, overlook the actual needs of the local population. We are confronted with a culture that, in the end, considers itself more important than the foreign one where it has settled.

Berlinale Series (at the Zoo Palast):

Bad Banks

Germany / Luxembourg

Director: Christian Schwochow (*Paula*)

Head writer: Oliver Kienle (*Four Hands*) based on a concept by Lisa
Blumenberg

With Paula Beer, Barry Atsma, Désirée Nosbusch, Albrecht Schuch, Mai
Duong Kieu, Marc Limpach, Tobias Moretti

Broadcaster: ZDF, ARTE

World premiere

Heimebane (Home Ground)

Norway

Creator: Johan Fasting

Director: Arild Andresen (*The Orheim Company, The Liverpool Goalie*)

With Ane Dahl Torp, John Carew

Broadcaster: NRK

World premiere



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Liberty

Denmark

Creator: Asger Leth (*Ghosts of Cité Soleil, Man on a Ledge*)

Director: Mikael Marcimain (*Call Girl, Gentlemen & Gangsters*)

With Connie Nielsen, Carsten Bjørnlund, Sofie Gråbøl, Magnus Krepper, Charlie Karumi, Anton Hjejle

Broadcaster: DR

World premiere

The Looming Tower

USA

Creators: Dan Futterman (*Capote, Foxcatcher*), Alex Gibney (*Taxi to the Dark Side, Zero Days*), Lawrence Wright (*Going Clear: Scientology & the Prison of Belief*)

Director: Alex Gibney

Written by Dan Futterman, based on the book by Lawrence Wright

With Jeff Daniels, Tahar Rahim, Peter Sarsgaard, Wrenn Schmidt, Bill Camp, Michael Stuhlbarg

Broadcaster: Amazon, Hulu (USA)

International premiere

Picnic at Hanging Rock

Australia

Director: Larysa Kondracki (*The Whistleblower, Shut Eye*), episodes 1-3

Written by Beatrix Christian, Alice Addison

With Natalie Dormer, Lily Sullivan, Madeleine Madden, Samara Weaving, Lola Bessis, Yael Stone, Inez Curren, Harrison Gilbertson, Ruby Rees

Broadcaster: Foxtel

International Premiere

Sleeping Bears

Israel

Creator and director: Keren Margalit (*The A Word, Israel, In Treatment, Israel*)

With Noa Koler, Yossi Marshek, Alma Zak, Yaakov Zada Daniel, Doron Tavory

Broadcaster: Keshet Broadcasting

International premiere

The Terror

USA

Showrunners: David Kajganich (*True Story, A Bigger Splash*) and Soo Hugh (*The Whispers, The Killing*)

Director: Edward Berger (*Jack, Deutschland 83*), episodes 1-3

With Jared Harris, Tobias Menzies, Ciarán Hinds, Paul Ready, Adam Nagaitis, Nive Nielsen, Ian Hart



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Broadcaster: AMC, AMC Networks International, Amazon
World premiere

Alongside with the series presented in the *Berlinale Special* programme, the industry platforms of the festival host the "Drama Series Days" from February 19 to February 21, 2018 - a joint initiative of the *European Film Market*, the *Berlinale Co-Production Market*, and *Berlinale Talents*. The "Drama Series Days" are presented jointly with the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW at the *European Film Market*. It welcomes creators, buyers, sales agents, producers, commissioning editors and financial backers of high-quality drama to discuss, present and promote new episodic content and projects in development.

For more information please visit www.dramaseriedays.de.

Press Office
January 18, 2018