

## Press Release



### A world in pieces: the films of the 40th Berlinale *Forum*

In its 40th year, the Berlinale *Forum* features a selection of films that capture the mood of the times in a sensitive way. Rarely have there been, in feature films and documentaries alike, as many people caught in insolvable conflicts, faced with essential decisions or staring into the abyss as in this year's selection of films.

Domestic filmmaking makes its presence felt in the programme in a manner exciting, varied and surprising in its strength. In *Orly*, Angela Schanelec succeeds in staging an intimate chamber piece in a setting known for its hectic pace. The hall of departures at Orly airport in Paris serves as the backdrop for a mosaic of personal stories, small dramas and existential conflicts. Tatjana Turanskyj's feature debut *The Drifter* has a feel for subtle comedy, creating a portrait of a woman in her early forties who, despite losing her job as an architect, is not willing to bow to the pressures of the workfare society.

Dominik Graf's *Im Angesicht des Verbrechens* deals with the Russian underworld, albeit right in the middle of the former West Berlin. Conceived as a television series, this eight-hour mammoth work is above all a bold epic about obligation, guilt and the difficulty of holding one's own in a world where everyone's place is determined by their origin. The protagonist of Thomas Arslan's new feature *In the Shadows* is just as incapable of changing his spots; the film tells the story of a robber released from prison who is preparing one last job whilst trying to evade a police officer who is corrupt through and through.

By appropriating classic elements of the gangster drama, Arslan and Graf represent the trend for using the rules of genre cinema in an unconventional way. In a similar manner, the French feature *Native of Eurasia* by Lithuanian director Sharunas Bartas tells the story of a gangster who sets off on an odyssey across Europe in an attempt to save his skin. The chase across a continent full of contrasts turns into a dark vision of the future. In *Haze*, Turkish director Tayfun Pirselimoglu alludes to a criminal plot surrounding a contract killing, in whose shadow he situates a laconic drama about life and death on the periphery of Istanbul.

The documentary works in this year's *Forum* cover a broad spectrum of filmic forms and subjects. The Swiss contribution *Aisheen [Still Alive in Gaza]* by Nicolas Wadimoff paints an unadorned picture of life in a place sealed off from the outside. In *The Oath*, American director Laura Poitras gains an extraordinary inside view of militant Islamism. And in *La belle visite*, Canadian Jean-François Caissy observes life in a former motel converted into an old people's home.

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In the essayistic *Head Cold*, Berlin director Gamma Bak shows great courage in making herself and her psychosis the subject of her film. Philip Scheffner's *The Day of the Sparrow* deals with the deceptive peace in a country that is conducting a war elsewhere. In *Sunny Land*, Aljoscha Weskott and Marietta Kesting are also concerned with looking beyond a deceptive surface. Their documentary film essay travels back in time to South Africa under Apartheid, to the "Sun City" entertainment complex, which emerges as a global metaphor.

A total of four directorial debuts from Korea and Taiwan offers enjoyable takes on a generation about to take over the reins for the future, for better or worse. In *Au revoir Taipei*, director Arvin Chen focuses on a young man who is eagerly yet unsuccessfully swotting up on French in order to follow his beloved to Paris, embroiling him in a gangster story full of absurd situation comedy. In *I'm in Trouble!*, So Sang-min is equally interested in the peculiarities of men in love, pushing an unsuccessful poet from one faux pas to the next.

The 40th Berlinale *Forum* will be showing a total of 34 films in the main programme, 19 of which are world premieres and 12 of which are international premieres. As part of its special screenings, the section will be showing a three film homage to director Shimazu Yasujiro, a director who is still largely unknown in this part of the world and who is seen as one of the modernisers of Japanese pre-war cinema.

A separate press release will be made for the "Four Decades of the *Forum*" anniversary programme.

The films to be shown in the 40th *Forum* as part of the official programme of the 60<sup>th</sup> Berlin International Film Festival:

*A Crowd of Three (Kenta to Jun to Kayo chan no kuni)* by Omori Tatsushi, Japan (IP)

*Aisheen [Still Alive in Gaza]* by Nicolas Wadimoff, Switzerland/Qatar/France (WP)

*Au revoir Taipei (Yī yè Tái běi)* by Arvin Chen, Taiwan/USA/Germany (WP)

*La belle visite* by Jean-François Caissy, Canada (IP)

*Bibliothèque Pascal* by Szabolcs Hajdu, Hungary/Germany (IP)

*Black Bus (Soreret)* by Anat Yuta Zuria, Israel (IP)



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*La bocca del lupo* by Pietro Marcello, Italy (IP)

*Congo in Four Acts* by Dieudo Hamadi, Divita Wa Lusala, Patrick Ken Kalala, Kiripi Katembo Siku, Democratic Republic of Congo/South Africa (WP)

*Crossing the Mountain (Fān shān)* by Yang Rui, People's Republic of China (WP)

*Double Tide* by Sharon Lockhart, USA/Austria (IP)

*Eine flexible Frau (The Drifter)* by Tatjana Turanskyj, Germany (WP)

*El recuento de los daños (The Counting of the Damages)* by Inés de Oliveira Cézar, Argentina (WP)

*El vuelco del cangrejo (Crab Trap)* by Oscar Ruíz Navia, Colombia/France (EP)

*Fin (End)* by Luis Sampieri, Spain (WP)

*Im Schatten (In the Shadows)* by Thomas Arslan, Germany (WP)

*I'm in Trouble! (Na-neun gon-kyeong-e cheo-haet-da!)* by So Sang-min, Republic of Korea (IP)

*Imani* by Caroline Kamyá, Uganda/Sweden/Canada (WP)

*Indigène d'Eurasie (Native of Eurasia)* by Sharunas Bartas, France/Lithuania/Russian Federation (WP)

*Kanikōsen* by Sabu, Japan (EP)

*The Man Beyond the Bridge (Paltadacho Munis)* by Laxmikant Shetgaonkar, India (EP)

*The Oath* by Laura Poitras, USA (IP)

*One Day (Yǒu yī tiān)* by Hou Chi-Jan, Taiwan (WP)

*Orly* by Angela Schanelec, Germany/France (WP)

*Our Fantastic 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Neo-wa na-eui i-shib-il-seki)* by Ryu Hyung-ki, Republic of Korea (IP)

*Portrait of the Fighter as a Young Man (Portretul luptătorului la tinerețe)* by Constantin Popescu, Romania (WP)

*Pus (Haze)* by Tayfun Pirseliimoğlu, Turkey/Greece (IP)

*Putty Hill* by Matthew Porterfield, USA (WP)



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*Sawako Decides (Kawa no soko kara konnichi wa)* by Ishii Yuya, Japan (IP)

*Schnupfen im Kopf (Head Cold)* by Gamma Bak, Germany/Hungary (WP)

*Sona, the Other Myself (Sona, mō hitori no watashi)* by Yang Yonghi, Japan/Republic of Korea (WP)

*Sunny Land* by Aljoscha Weskott, Marietta Kesting, Germany/South Africa (WP)

*Der Tag des Spatzen (The Day of the Sparrow)* by Philip Scheffner, Germany (WP)

*Winter's Bone* by Debra Granik, USA (IP)

*Ya (I am)* by Igor Voloshin, Russian Federation (IP)

## Special Screenings

*Antonio das Mortes (O Dragão da Maldade contra o Santo Guerreiro)* by Glauber Rocha, Brasil

Boris Lehman et ses amis - Three short films by Boris Lehman

*Retouches et réparations* by Boris Lehman, Belgium (WP)

*Choses qui me rattachent aux êtres* by Boris Lehman, Belgium (WP)

*Un peintre sous surveillance* by Boris Lehman, Belgium

*Im Angesicht des Verbrechens* by Dominik Graf, Germany (WP)

*Kyoto Story (Kyōto Uzumasa monogatari)* by Yoji Yamada, Tsutomu Abe, Japan (WP)

*Nénette* by Nicolas Philibert, France (WP)

*Word is Out - Stories of Some of Our Lives* by Rob Epstein, USA

*The Lights of Asakusa (Asakusa no tomoshibi)* by Shimazu Yasujiro, Japan

*So Goes My Love (Ai yori ai e)* by Shimazu Yasujiro, Japan

*The Trio's Engagement (Konyaku sanbagarasu)* by Shimazu Yasujiro, Japan

Press Office

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