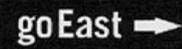


FESTIVAL OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN FILM WIESBADEN 05.04. TO 11.04.2006



Press Release

Frankfurt/Wiesbaden, February 2006

Plunging into the Film Worlds of Eastern Europe

Taking place in Wiesbaden from 5 to 11 April 2006: goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film / Two new awards increase prize money to total of 34,000 euros / “Mainstream Made in Russia” symposium / Screenings and exhibition in honour of Krzysztof Kieślowski

In its sixth year of existence **goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film** in Wiesbaden is increasing its prize money to a total of 34,000 euros. Two new awards place added stress on artistic innovation and promoting young filmmakers. In 2006 the German Foreign Ministry is introducing an award explicitly devoted to “artistic originality which creates cultural variety”, endowed with 2,000 euros. **goEast** is also pleased to announce that the BHF-BANK Foundation has agreed to sponsor the film school competition on a long-term basis. The Foundation will award three prizes respectively endowed with 1,000 euros to the winners in the Animation, Short Feature Film, and Documentary/Experimental Film categories, as well as the BHF-BANK-Foundation-Award (worth 1,500 euros) for the best short from a non-German film school.

“With meanwhile eight endowed awards as well as the prestigious International Film Critics’ Award the festival is now an attractive platform for directors and producers from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe,” says festival director Christine Kopf. “It is a platform enabling them to show their films to a highly interested audience that comes to Wiesbaden from the entire Rhine-Main region as well as from the rest of Germany.”

The 2006 **goEast** Competition features 10 feature films and 6 documentaries; 13 of the films are screening in Germany for the first time. A total of more than 100 films from 15 different countries will be showing in the seven festival sections. The main **goEast** prize is the “Golden Lily” – the Škoda Award, which is worth 10,000 euros, for the Best Film. The Hertie Documentary Award, likewise endowed with 10,000 euros, goes to a competing documentary film which deals in a profound manner with the ongoing transformation process in Central and Eastern Europe. The award is endowed by the Hertie-Stiftung; this nonprofit foundation is the main private **goEast** sponsor and has been committed to the festival since the very first year. The City of Wiesbaden donates the prize, worth 7,500 euros, for Best Director. **goEast** is staged by the Deutsches Filminstitut – DIF, and is made possible above all due to the sponsorship of the “hessen-media” initiative and of the City of Wiesbaden, capital of the state of Hesse.

“**Mainstream Made in Russia**” is the title of the **goEast** symposium running from 6 to 8 April 2006 under the leadership of Hans-Joachim Schlegel. Its subject will be the latest developments in the Russian film industry, which became clear to German audiences, too, on release of the film “Wächter der Nacht”. The symposium is built around a comprehensive film programme and lectures by experts from Russia and Germany highlighting forms and functions of popular Russian film from a range of perspectives including the historical. All of the events programmed for the symposium are open to the general public.

The **Portrait** section introduced last year will be carried forward in 2006 with the work of the Lithuanian director Šarūnas Bartas. His sparse and challenging films, shot in black and white or restrained colours and frequently without specific narration or dialogue, are striking for their brittle lyricism.

The **Students’ Competition** – a firm audience favourite – gives young filmmakers from East and West an opportunity to present their short films. Guesting in Wiesbaden this year are film academies from Sarajevo,

Bucharest, Berlin, the Rhine-Main region, and Kassel. The winners are chosen by audience vote, with one exception: the BHF-BANK-Foundation Award, which is given by a jury. An interest in promoting young talent is likewise expressed in the new, Robert Bosch Stiftung-sponsored “**goEast Young Professionals**” programme, which invites participants in the students’ competition to profit from a one-week-long further-education programme tailored to their specific needs.

One of the foremost goals of **goEast** is to further the dialogue between East and West. In the week from 5 to 11 April, festival visitors from Germany and abroad can join film lovers and industry representatives in exploring the art of film in a fascinating region stretching from the Baltic to Bulgaria, from Poland to the furthest frontiers of Russia. Every evening at the festival centre in Villa Clementine, guests will have the chance to discuss current developments in East European filmmaking. Which trends are predominant in the different countries? Are there signs of new developments in regard to production conditions? Do East European films stand a chance of success at the German box office? These and other questions are the focus of talks with directors, of lectures and panel discussions. Similar issues will be covered by a roundtable on the subject “Distributing Central and Eastern European Films in Germany”, to which **goEast** and the DEFA foundation have jointly invited German distributors to Wiesbaden.

In order to do justice to a cultural diversity of which many people in Germany remain unaware, **goEast** supplements the festival competition and other film sections with a comprehensive sidebar programme. In 2006 the exhibition “Krzysztof Kieślowski. Signs and Memory” at the Museum Wiesbaden offers some insight into the life and work of the great Polish director whose death occurred ten years ago in March. A number of his films will be shown to accompany the exhibition. In Viktor Jerofejew, **goEast** has won as a guest one of Russia’s leading authors and the son of a close friend of Stalin. In his book “The Good Stalin”, which was published by Berlin Verlag in 2004, he reflects upon his childhood at the centre of political power, and his path to liberation.

A concert by the Russian **skacore outfit “Leningrad”** promises to deliver a highlight of the **goEast** sidebar programme. Regularly listed in the Russian charts, this underground band came to the notice of a German audience primarily through Wladimir Kaminer’s “Russendisko”, the hip Berlin event whose acclaimed guest appearance at **goEast 2005 “Leningrad”** seems sure to match.

We will be pleased to provide you with further information and print-ready photographic material.

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